# THEOLOGY

VOL. XL FEBRUARY, 1940 No. 236

## EDITORIAL

THERE may be readers of THEOLOGY who are puzzled by the incongruous ways in which the word " liberal " is being used. Some of our contributors use it evidently as a term of commendation, others not less evidently as a term of condemnation. Do these deplore what those approve, or is the word being used in different and even contradictory senses? The various meanings which the word can bear go far, though by no means all the way, towards explaining the divergent usage, and it may be profitable to consider some of them. It is generally agreed that " a liberal education " is a good thing, but the proper sense of the phrase is less generally known. It means not an education which instils broad-mindedness nor in which enlightened methods of teaching prevail, but the education which is worthy of a free man, and it is thus opposed on the one hand to a narrowly technical or professional training and on the other to education that stops short before manhood is reached. This sense of the word, however, need not now detain us, for apart from the single phrase it is almost obsolete.

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Outside a definitely political or theological context, the word " liberal " or " liberal-minded " usually denotes a quality that few would wish to disclaim. The man of liberal temper is free from violent prejudices, tolerant of those who differ from him, not easily shocked, willing to learn, a sympathetic listener, one who makes generous allowances. Probably many of the Christians who have styled themselves " liberal " have intended to say that they aspire to the possession of those dispositions—dispositions which, it must be confessed, have not been universally or characteristically associated with the Christian name. It is not unreasonable to anticipate that there will always be enough bigotry and obscurantism in the Church, as well as outside it, to require continual emphasis upon the virtue of liberal-mindedness. It is a virtue that is not infrequently

conspicuous by its absence where it is most loudly professed. Swift made allusion to a prelate " who can smell Popery at 500 miles distance, better than fanaticism just under his nose," and in doing so illuminated a perennial human infirmity.

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Liberal, as the title of a political party, has in these days little distinctive content. It would not be easy to maintain that our three chief political parties stand now for three different social philosophies. Nevertheless, in so far as they possess a social philosophy at all, it may be appropriately described as liberalism. In this sense liberalism is our national creed. It signifies a complex body of conscious beliefs and unconscious assumptions which are partly consistent with, and partly inconsistent with, the Christian faith. The conscious beliefs include the convictions that there are objective and universal standards of truth and justice, and that the human person has a status in the universe higher than that of any human institution. These convictions not only are historically derived from the Christian tradition, but are dependent on the Christian metaphysic for their justification. It came, however, to be assumed that they could be safely detached from their foundation in Christian dogma, and sustained instead by that general philosophy of immanence and evolutionary progress which underlies the thinking of most of those who now consciously hold the liberal beliefs. Mr Demant, in *The Religious Prospect*, calls the conscious beliefs " the liberal doctrine " and the unconscious assumptions " the liberal dogma." This choice of terms is unfamiliar and may be confusing, but his analysis should be studied by all who wish to get to the roots of the matter. It has far-reaching implications, and shows, for instance, how liberalism can now easily turn into its opposite as in the transition to totalitarianism. When the Christian foundations have been cleared away and the new dogma of immanent process or becoming has its perfect work, the liberal beliefs are left without anything to support them. This obviously helps to explain the conflicting uses to which the word " liberal " lends itself. Those Christians who identify liberalism with its beliefs naturally speak of it with approval, whereas those who identify it with its assumptions must regard it as a grave error; and we may add that those who identify it with

both will regard it as an unsuitable object for either commendation or condemnation, unless careful qualifications are introduced.

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This embarrassing ambiguity is not a new discovery. It was recognized by Newman. He had to explain how it came about that, while he and his friends in England were occupied in attacking liberalism, some of the most eminent of his co-religionists in France were aggressively professing it. Of Montalembert and Lacordaire Newman said: "In their general line of thought and conduct I enthusiastically concur, and consider them to be before their age"; and he attributed his hesitation to make use of their language about liberalism to "some differences in the use of words or in the circumstances of country."[1] Nor is the ambiguity confined to the word "liberalism"; the word "humanism" is a parallel case. Many Christians use it as a symbol for the source of modern errors; on the other hand, M. Maritain entitles his social philosophy *Humanisme intégral*, and Dr Brunner writes: "There is a genuine, Scriptural and Christian Humanism."[2] Profounder issues are involved than a divergence in the use of words, arising from local conditions. Newman was more benevolent to the French liberal Catholics than just to his own peculiar insights when he dismissed the apparent cleavage so lightly.

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What is at stake is the Christian attitude to the Renaissance and to the development of post-Renaissance culture. The cumulative effect of the movements which have made modern Europe what it is—the Reformation, the Enlightenment, the Romantic revival—has been to dissolve the world-view which was grounded in Christian dogma. None of these movements was anti-Christian in intent; far from it. But, if we are to judge the whole process by its fruits, we cannot doubt that radical error has been making its way and has issued in a world-view which is fundamentally hostile to the Christian. What was intended to be a progressive emancipation of the Christian spirit has in fact led it into a captivity by comparison with which some are inclined to

[1] *Apologia pro Vita Sua* (1873 edition), pp. 285 *f.* [2] *Man in Revolt*, p. 329.

reckon the Middle Ages as an era of freedom as well as of faith. It would be fantastic and futile to desire a return to the medieval situation. Moreover, there is very much in post-Renaissance culture that the Christian tradition needs to assimilate, and that it has not yet successfully assimilated. If liberalism is used as a portmanteau term to cover the secularism, the optimism, the anthropocentric autonomy of the modern world-view, then we can understand why Christians should regard it as a deadly foe to be combated. But if it is used only with reference to certain elements in modernity which, however they may have been perverted, are intrinsically good, then we can understand why Christians should wish to assert their acceptance of these elements—*e.g.*, scientific method, literary and historical criticism, the changed attitude to persecution, and the positive values of freedom.

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Now that suspicion, not to say horror, of liberalism in the former sense is entering into the Christian mind, it may be more necessary than ever to assert the duty of making full use of those scientific and critical disciplines which have been signally developed in the modern period, and to maintain with Bishop Creighton that tolerance " is needful on the part of the Church, as an organized body; for only by its liberal exercise can the sincerity of its individual members be preserved."[1] But to lay claim on this account to the title " liberal " may cause confusion in view of the other associations of the word. In any case there is need for a stringent clarification of Christian thought as to the fundamental nature of the world-view which pervades modern society. This issue is apparent in the discussion that has been proceeding in our pages between the older and younger theologians. The Dean of Exeter has used the following words in a description of the writers of *Lux Mundi*:

" There was in them what might be called a resolute materialism; they loved the world, the whole world, and all that was in

[1] *Persecution and Tolerance*, p. 137; the passage continues: " No educator can discharge his task unless he encourages frankness, outspokenness and sincerity among those whom he undertakes to teach. The Church, as the divinely appointed educator of mankind, must cherish these qualities."

it; they set themselves to help in the redemption of it, its philosophy, its science, its industry, its art, its letters; they did not believe that the *Zeitgeist* was ultimately hostile."[1]

The heirs-presumptive of the *Lux Mundi* tradition urge that this was too favourable a view. The character of the *Zeitgeist* is no longer obscure; it is ultimately hostile. The world and all that is in it must still be redeemed; if, however, it is to be redeemed, it will be not by gentle advances here and there, but by vigorous assault all along the line.

[1] S. C. Carpenter, *Church and People*, p. 560.

## Christian Faith and Natural Law

In his challenging article entitled " Theology To-day," the Archbishop of York presents several questions which in his opinion require a fresh answer in the light of contemporary history. One of these questions is: " Is there a Natural Order which is from God as Catholic tradition holds, or is there only Natural Disorder, the fruit of sin, from which Christ delivers us as continental Protestantism has held ?" I should like to address myself to this question and suggest that the facts of human history are more complex than either the traditional Catholic or Protestant doctrines of natural order and natural law suggest.

According to Thomistic doctrine, the Fall robbed man of a *donum superadditum* but left him with a *pura naturalia*, which includes a capacity for natural justice. What is lost is a capacity for faith, hope and love—that is, the ability to rise above the natural order and have communion with divine and supernatural order, to know God and, in fellowship with Him, to be delivered of the fears, anxieties and sins which result from this separation from God. The fallen man is thus essentially an incomplete man, who is completed by the infusion of sacramental grace, which restores practically, though not quite, all of the supernatural virtues which were lost in the Fall. The Fall does not seriously impair man's capacity for natural justice. Only this is an incomplete perfection, incapable of itself to rise to the heights of love.

According to Protestant theology the Fall had much more serious consequences. It left man " totally corrupt " and " utterly leprous and unclean." The very reason which in Catholic thought is regarded as the instrument and basis of natural justice is believed in Protestant thought to be infected by the Fall and incapable of arriving at any true definition of justice. Calvin is slightly more equivocal about the effects of sin upon reason than Luther, and as a consequence Calvinism does not relegate the natural law and the whole problem of justice so completely to the background as does Lutheranism. Nevertheless the theory of total depravity is only slightly qualified in Calvinism.

I should like to maintain that the real crux of the human situation is missed in both the Catholic and the Protestant version of the effect of sin upon man's capacity for justice.

Something more than a brief paper would be required to prove such a thesis; I must content myself therefore with suggesting the argument in general outline.

The biblical conception of man includes three primary terms: (*a*) he is made in the image of God, (*b*) he is a creature, and (*c*) he is a sinner. His basic sin is pride. If this pride is closely analysed it is discovered to be man's unwillingness to acknowledge his creatureliness. He is betrayed by his greatness to hide his weakness. He is tempted by his ability to gain his own security to deny his insecurity, and refuses to admit that he has no final security except in God. He is tempted by his knowledge to deny his ignorance. (This is the source of all " ideological taint " in human knowledge.) It is not that man in his weakness has finite perspectives which make conflicts between varying perspectives so filled with fanatic fury in all human history; it is that man denies the finiteness of his perspectives that tempts him to such fanatic cruelty against those who hold convictions other than his own. The quintessence of sin is, in short, that man " changes the glory of the incorruptible God into the image of corruptible man." He always usurps God's place and claims to be the final judge of human actions.

The loss of man's original perfection therefore never leaves him with an untarnished though incomplete natural justice. All statements and definitions of justice are corrupted by even the most rational men through the fact that the definition is coloured by interest. This is the truth in the Marxist theory of rationalization and in its assertion that all culture is corrupted by an ideological taint. The unfortunate fact about the Marxist theory is that it is used primarily as a weapon in social conflict. The enemy is charged with this dishonesty, but the Marxist himself claims to be free of it. This is, of course, merely to commit the final sin of self-righteousness and to imagine ourselves free of the sin which we discern in the enemy. The fact that we do not discern it in ourselves is a proof of our sin and not of our freedom from sin. Christ's parable of the mote and the beam is a perfect refutation of this illusion.

The fact remains, nevertheless, that reason is not capable of defining any standard of justice which is universally valid or acceptable. Thus Thomistic definitions of justice are filled with specific details which are drawn from the given realities of a feudal social order and may be regarded as " rationalizations " of a feudal aristocracy's dominant

position in society. (The much praised Catholic prohibition of usury could be maintained only as long as the dominant aristocratic class were borrowers rather than lenders of money. When the static wealth of the landowners yielded to the more dynamic wealth of the financiers and industrialists the prohibition of usury vanished. Catholics hold Protestantism responsible for this development, but it is significant that the Catholic Church makes no effort to impose the prohibition of usury upon its own bourgeois members.)

Bourgeois idealists of the eighteenth century invented new natural law theories and invested them with bourgeois rather than feudal-aristocratic content. The natural law of the eighteenth century was supposed to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. It was more exactly a "law of nature" rather than a "law of reason." But its real significance lay in its specific content. The content of this law justified the bourgeois classes in their ideals, just as the older law justified the feudal aristocrats. In short, it is not possible to state a universally valid concept of justice from any particular sociological locus in history. Nor is it possible to avoid either making the effort or making pretences of universality which human finiteness does not justify. This inevitable pretence is the revelation of "original sin" in history. Human history is consequently more tragic than Catholic theology assumes. It is not an incomplete world yearning for completion, and finding it in the Incarnation. It is a tragic world, troubled not by finiteness so much as by "false eternals" and false absolutes, and expressing the pride of these false absolutes even in the highest reaches of its spirituality. It is not the Incarnation as such which is the good news of the Gospel, but rather the revelation of a just God who is also merciful; this is the true content of the Incarnation. That is, it is the Atonement which fills the Incarnation with meaning.

But Catholic thought not only fails to do justice to the positive character of the sinful element in all human definitions and realizations of natural justice. It also fails to do justice to the relation of love to justice. In its conception, natural justice is good as far as it goes, but it must be completed by the supernatural virtue of love. The true situation is that anything short of love cannot be perfect justice. In fact, every definition of justice actually presupposes sin as a given reality. It is only because life is in conflict with life,

because of sinful self-interest, that we are required carefully to define schemes of justice which prevent one life from taking advantage of another. Yet no scheme of justice can do full justice to all the variable factors which the freedom of man introduces into human history. Significantly both eighteenth-century and medieval conceptions of natural law are ultimately derived from Stoic conceptions. And it is the very nature of Stoic philosophy that it is confused about the relation of nature to reason. This confusion is due to the fact that it does not fully understand the freedom of man. In all Græco-Roman rationalism, whether Platonic, Aristotelian or Stoic, it is assumed that man's freedom is secured by his rational transcendence over nature. Since reason and freedom are identified, it is assumed that the freedom which man has over nature is held in check and disciplined by his reason. The real situation is that man transcends his own reason; which is to say that he is not bound in his actions by reason's coherences and systems. His freedom consists in a capacity for self-transcendence in infinite regression. There is therefore no limit in reason for either his creativity or his sin. There is no possibility of giving a rational definition of a just relation between man and man or nation and nation short of a complete love in which each life affirms the interests of the other. Every effort to give a definition of justice short of this perfect love invariably introduces contingent factors, conditions of time and place, into the definition.

Love is the only final structure of freedom. Human personality as a system of infinite potentialities makes it impossible to define absolutely what I owe to my fellow-man, since nothing that he now is exhausts what he might be. Human personality as capacity for infinite self-transcendence makes it impossible from my own standpoint to rest content in any ordered relation with my fellow-men. There is no such relation which I cannot transcend to imagine a better one in terms of the ideal of love. Provisional definitions of justice short of this perfect love are, of course, necessary. But they are much more provisional than any natural law theory, whether medieval or modern, realizes. The freedom of man is too great to make it possible to define any scheme of justice absolutely in terms of " necessary " standards.

According to Catholic theology it is this structure of ultimate freedom which is lost in the Fall just as the accompanying virtue of love is lost. The real situation is that

" original justice " in the sense of a mythical " perfection before the Fall " is never completely lost. It is not a reality in man but always a potentiality. It is always what he ought to be. It is the only goodness completely compatible with his own and his fellow-man's freedom—that is, with their ultimate transcendence over all circumstances of nature. Man is neither as completely bereft of " original justice " nor as completely in possession of " natural justice " as the Catholic theory assumes.

Protestant theory, on the other hand, partly because of Luther's nominalistic errors, has no sense of an abiding structure at all. Luther's theory of total depravity is, in fact, more intimately related to his nominalism than is generally realized. Only in nominalistic terms, in which love is regarded as good by the fiat of God and not because it is actually the structure of freedom, can it be supposed that life could be completely at variance with itself. " Sin," said St Augustine quite truly, " cannot tear up nature by the roots." Injustice has meaning only against a background of a sense of justice. What is more, it cannot maintain itself without at least a minimal content of justice. The " ideological taint " in all human truth could have no meaning except against the background of a truth which is not so tainted. Men always jump to the erroneous conclusion that because they can conceive of a truth and a justice which completely transcend their interests, they are therefore also able to realize such truth and such justice. Against this error of the optimists, Protestant pessimism affirms the equally absurd proposition that sin has completely destroyed all truth and justice.

Protestantism has been betrayed into this error partly by its literalism, by which it defines the Fall as an historic event and " perfection before the Fall " as a perfection existing in an historical epoch before the Fall. When Luther essays to define this perfection he indulges in all kinds of fantastic nonsense. The perfection before the Fall is always an ideal possibility before the act. It describes a dimension of human existence rather than a period of history. It is the vision of health which even a sick man has. It is the structure of the good without which there could be no evil. The anarchy of Europe is evil only because it operates against an ideal possibility and necessity of order in Europe. The blindness of the eye is evil only because the ideal possibility is sight.

Protestant pessimism has been rightfully accused by Catholic thinkers of leading to obscurantism in culture and to antinomianism in morals; and it would be difficult to estimate to what degree our present anarchy is due to Protestant errors. But Catholics forget that Protestant pessimism is but a corrupted form of a prophetic criticism which Christianity must make even against its own culture, and that the medieval culture was subject to such a criticism by reason of its inability to recognize to what degree Christianity as a culture and as an institution is involved not only in the finiteness of history but in the sin of history—that is, precisely in the effort to hide finiteness and to pretend a transcendent perfection which cannot be achieved in history.

It may be useful to apply the theory that all human life stands under an ideal possibility purer than the natural law, and that at the same time it is involved in sinful reality much more dubious than the natural justice which Catholic thought declares to be possible, to contemporary history. I will choose one specific example, prompted by the Archbishop of York's splendid wireless address in October last in favour of a " negotiated " rather than an " imposed " peace. The peace of Versailles was an imposed peace. Its territorial provisions were really more just than is sometimes supposed at the present moment. But among its provisions it contained the forced admission of sole guilt by the vanquished, a piece of psychological cruelty which reveals self-righteousness at its worst. (It is interesting how our worst sins are always derived from self-righteousness, which is what gives Christ's contest with the Pharisees such relevance.) Against such a peace his Grace, and with him many others, are now pleading for a negotiated peace. They rightly believe that only in such a peace can Europe find security.

Yet it must be recognized that there is no definition of natural justice which can give us a really adequate outline of a just peace. Justice cannot be established in the world by pure moral suasion. It is achieved only as some kind of decent equilibrium of power is established. And such an equilibrium is subject to a thousand contingencies of geography and history. We cannot make peace with Hitler now because his power dominates the Continent and his idea of a just peace is one which leaves him in the security of that dominance. We believe, I think rightly, that a more just peace can be established if that dominance is

broken. But in as far as the Hitlerian imperial will must be broken first, the new peace will be an imposed peace. We may hope that a chastened Germany will accept it and make it its own. But even if vindictive passions are checked, as they were not in 1918, the fact that Germany will be defeated will rob her of some ideal possibilities in Europe, which she might have had but for her defeat in the war.

Nor is it possible for us to be sure that our conception of peace in Europe, in even our most impartial moments, could do full justice to certain aspects of the European situation which might be seen from the German, but not from our perspective. On the other hand, we must assume that even the most chastened Germany would not be willing, except as she is forced, to accept certain provisions for the freedom of Poland and Czecho-Slovakia and the freedom of small nations generally. The inclination of the strong to make themselves the sponsors of the weak, and to claim that they are doing this not for their own but for the general good, is not a German vice. The Germans have merely accentuated a common vice of history and one that influences every concrete realization of justice. The concretion of justice in specific historic instances always depends upon a certain equilibrium of forces, which prevents the organizing will of the strong from degenerating into tyranny. Without resistance even the best ruler, oligarchy, or hegemonous nation would be tempted to allow its creative function of organization to degenerate into tyranny. Furthermore, even the most resolute moral resistance against vindictive passion cannot prevent retributive justice from degenerating into vindictiveness, if the foe is so thoroughly defeated as to invite the type of egotism which expresses itself in vindictiveness.

It is significant, moreover, that no " rational " standard of retributive justice can be defined. What is worked out in each particular instance is always some *ad hoc* compromise between vindictiveness on the one hand and forgiveness on the other. This is particularly true of international disputes in which there are no genuinely impartial courts of adjudication. (Neutral nations are interested in the particular balance of power which emerges out of each conflict.) The structure of justice which emerges from each overt conflict must therefore be established to a very considerable degree by the disputants in the conflict, more particularly by the victors.

Yet men are not completely blinded by self-interest or lost in this maze of historical relativity. What always remains with them is not some uncorrupted bit of reason, which gives them universally valid standards of justice. What remains with them is something higher—namely, the law of love, which they dimly recognize as the law of their being, as the structure of human freedom, and which, in Christian faith, Christ clarifies and redefines; which is why He is called the "second Adam." It is the weakness of Protestant pessimism that it denies the reality of this potential perfection and its relevance in the affairs of politics.

The effort of the Christian Church in Britain at the present moment to stem the tide of vindictiveness, which it rightly anticipates as an inevitable danger after the war, is a truer expression of the Christian spirit than pacifist disavowals of war as such. It is not possible to disavow war absolutely without disavowing the task of establishing justice. For justice rests upon a decent equilibrium of power; and all balances of power involve tension; and tension involves covert conflict; and there will be moments in history when covert conflict becomes overt. But it is possible to transcend a conflict while standing in it. Forgiveness is such a possibility. But forgiveness to the foe is possible only if I know myself to be a sinner—that is, if I do not have some cheap or easy sense of moral transcendence over the sinful reality of claims and counter-claims, which is the very stuff of history.

This does not mean that it would ever be possible to establish a justice based upon perfect forgiveness after a war. The sinfulness of human nature will relativize every ideal possibility. Vindictiveness (which is an egoistic corruption of justice) cannot be completely eliminated. But the quality of justice which can be achieved in a war will depend upon the degree to which a "Kingdom of God" perspective can be brought upon the situation. It is this higher imagination rather than some unspoiled rational definition of retributive justice which pulls justice out of the realm of vindictiveness.

Human nature is, in short, a realm of infinite possibilities of good and evil because of the character of human freedom. The love which is the law of its nature is a boundless self-giving. The sin which corrupts its life is a boundless assertion of the self. Between these two forces all kinds of *ad hoc* restraints may be elaborated and defined. We may call this natural law. But we had better realize how very

tentative it is. Otherwise we shall merely sanction some traditional relation between myself and my fellow-man as a "just" relation and quiet the voice of conscience which speaks to me of higher possibilities. What is more, we may stabilize sin and make it institutional; for it will be discovered invariably that my definition of justice guarantees certain advantages to myself to which I have no absolute right, but with which I have been invested by the accidents of history and the contingencies of nature and which the "old Adam" in me is only too happy to transmute into absolute rights.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR.

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## John Evelyn's Churchmanship

THAT John Evelyn was a churchman of unswerving loyalty is matter of common knowledge; as also the fact that he showed his courage by making his communion in Exeter chapel on Christmas Day in 1657, when, as he said, "the miscreants held their muskets against us as if they would have shot us at the altar." There are not, perhaps, many whose knowledge of his churchmanship goes much further, unless they have read his Diary and other writings with attention to the evidence that they give to the thought and practice of those seventeenth-century churchmen of whom Evelyn was representative, though himself of exceptional devotion and culture.

It would seem as if he had worked out for himself his conception of churchmanship and its obligations. Of his parents the Diary says little: his father was somewhat ascetic and of a singular and Christian moderation; his mother inclined to a religious melancholy or pious sadness. Oxford affected him but little, though he was in after life its loyal son; as an undergraduate he found the university exceedingly regular, under the exact discipline of William Laud. His father's death left him in early manhood free to choose his own way of living, and after the execution of the Earl of Strafford the timidity which alternated with his courage determined Evelyn to travel abroad rather than take up arms for the King, though for a brief spell he trailed a pike in Flanders as a volunteer.

The insatiable curiosity by which the Diary is continually

enriched led Evelyn from the moment of his arrival in the Low Countries to assist at many kinds of worship, beginning with a synagogue service at The Hague and a meeting of English Presbyterians on the following day. The city swarmed with sectaries, and his wish to converse with them brought him to " the extraordinary good table " of a Brownist, at which he found an English Carmelite seated. He missed no opportunity of new experience, enjoying a collation and very civil entertainment in a convent of Poor Clares, conferring with Jesuits at Antwerp and closely examining their school buildings.

He came back to England just after the battle of Edgehill, and in the following year felt so little vocation to arms that he obtained licence of his Majesty to travel again, this time in France; churchman though he was he did not realize how closely the fortunes of the Crown and the Church were entwined, or how great the royal need of supporters. For the time the visits to French churches, the inspection of innumerable relics and works of art in them, the disputations at the Sorbonne, and works of Catholic charity interested him more than the increasing difficulties of the Church in England, and far more than the Protestant Temple of Charenton, where the harmonious singing of psalms pleased him, but the disorder of the assembly as greatly displeased. He sauntered slowly down through France, entertained now by an archbishop, now by Jesuits, admiring, inquiring, noting all down without prejudice, till at last he quickened his pace to arrive at Rome. There both Jesuits and Benedictines aided his sight-seeing, among them a brother of Lord Falkland, " a witty young priest who afterwards came over to our Church." The churches, the singing, the sermons, the movement and colour of great ceremonies delighted him; if he reserved judgment upon the authenticity of this or that improbable relic at least he set down no sour comment upon the credulity of the papists, while for their " pious and worthy foundations " for the poor and sick he had unstinted admiration. Everywhere he was most courteously received, there was no hint that his real status was that of an English heretic, he was even invited by a Dominican to be godfather to a converted Jew and a Turk at their baptism by a bishop in Santa Maria sopra Minerva. It is but rarely in the record that criticism peeps out, as when he deemed the flagellations of a Good Friday procession to be a horrible and indeed heathenish

pomp. But though he found so much to admire he seems never to have been moved to contrast the splendour and security of the Church in France and Italy with the simplicity and growing distress of his own Communion; born in a bleak Sparta he had already made up his mind to be her worthy citizen.

The later entries in the Roman diary show the beginnings of a slight weariness of ceremonies. He turned homeward, loitering in Venice and Padua, making friends alike with the Patriarch of Venice and with Portuguese Jews of the ghetto. No aspect of religion was without its interest for him, and he was not only too tolerant by nature but also too well read in theology to share Nicholas Ferrar's strange abhorrence of the Roman Mass.

He had had few or no opportunities of Anglican worship, but he found them at last in the chapel of Sir Richard Browne, English Resident at the Court of France, where after a short courtship he married Sir Richard's daughter.

He got back to England in October, 1647, to find the kingdom divided against itself, and kiss the King's hand, now "in the power of those execrable villains who not long after murdered him." Then began the long period of persecution of which the Diary was to give so many vivid details. Two months after the King's death Mr Owen, a learned and sequestered minister, preached in Evelyn's parlour, and gave Evelyn and his household the blessed Sacrament—the customary phrase of the Diary—"now wholly out of use in the parish churches, on which the Presbyterians and Fanatics had usurped." Yet a week later he was able to hear the Common Prayer, a rare thing in those days, at St Peter's, Paul's Wharf, and on the same day and several times later he heard Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, preach in Lincoln's Inn chapel, where it was still possible to receive communion.

Then he went abroad again, to the new King's court at St Germain. It was a refuge for exiled churchmen, among them Cosin and Morley, who were to be bishops at the Restoration. One of Cosin's sermons was a censure of the Genevans for their irreverence towards the Blessed Virgin. Ordinations had now become infrequent in England, but Evelyn saw in the Residency chapel the ordination of two Restoration deans, John Durel, who in the deanery of Windsor was to provide both the Latin and the French versions of the Prayer Book of 1662, which latter Evelyn

was to hear used at the French chapel of the Savoy, and Brevint, afterwards Dean of Durham. The Bishop of Galloway made them deacon and priest on the same day " in regard to the necessity of the times, there being so few bishops left in England, and consequently danger of a failure of both functions."

On another flying visit to England he wandered to divers churches, and found their pulpits full of novices and novelties. Back at the Residency in Paris, he found Dr Cosin encouraging the exiles to steadfastness, and heard from him the story of the devotions which he had compiled for the ladies of Queen Henrietta Maria's Court—and which the Puritans afterwards made a count in the indictment against him—in order that they might meet on equal terms " the new-come-over French ladies " who, on the strength of possessing breviaries, had reproached the English ladies with want of zeal and religion.

Evelyn returned to England early in 1652, in time to see the funeral of the arch-rebel Ireton, dignified by every secular ceremonial. His intention was now to settle down in England, seeing that there was no appearance of any change for the better, and resigning himself to the domination of the Puritans in power, saving only in matters of conscience. Archbishop Usher was still preaching at Lincoln's Inn, and even in a parish church Evelyn could now and again hear an honest sermon, as at Lensham, where the priest had not yet been turned out. But on Christmas Day in that year no church was allowed to be open anywhere, and Evelyn had to keep the feast at Sayes Court, where a week later Mr Owen came to celebrate the blessed Sacrament. Thereafter visits of Mr Owen for the same purpose are often recorded. Evelyn did not absent himself altogether from the worship of the sectaries: at Oxford he listened to the famous Independent Dr Owen " perstringing episcopacy," though at other times he found something to commend in the more moderate of their sermons. But he went, as he once frankly admitted, in order that he might not be mistaken for a papist. With all good churchmen he winced under the pinpricks of the Puritans, as when on Ash Wednesday " the usurper Cromwell, in contradiction to all custom and decency, feasted at the Lord Mayor's, riding in triumph through the City."

A visit to Oxford for the Act showed the university to be sadly fallen from the good estate to which Laud had brought

it: there were but seven doctors to be created; only the pleasures of the table and of music were maintained as of old; and it was sad to see the windows of the cathedral much abused, though the chapels of Magdalen and New College were unspoiled, only the altar in the latter turned table-wise. At a later stage on the same rambling tour he reached York, to find that the Minster, of all the great churches in England, had been the best preserved from the fury of the sacrilegious, " by composition with the rebels when they took the city." He was perhaps unaware how much was due to the generous treatment of the city by Fairfax, himself born within sight of the Minster.

Back at Sayes Court in the Advent of 1654, he found the Puritan fetters riveted even more firmly upon the Church. All forms were now prohibited, so that for the solemn feasts he had either to go to London, where some of the orthodox sequestered divines privately used the Prayer Book and administered the sacraments, or procured one to minister in his library at Sayes Court. There were penalties for the observance of Christmas Day. But the effect of persecution was to strengthen his own practice; he notes on the 31st of March, 1655, " I made a visit to Dr Jeremy Taylor to confer with him about some spiritual matters, using him thenceforward as my ghostly father. I beseech Almighty God to make me ever mindful of, and thankful for, his heavenly assistances." But at Easter he was able to go to London with his family to hear Dr Wild at St Gregory's, " the ruling powers conniving at the use of the liturgy in this church alone," a small enough concession to all the Churchfolk of London. In the country he saw the people now so uninstructed that they had no principles, and were growing very ignorant of even the common points of Christianity, though doubtless many followed Evelyn's example and instructed their families at home.

Later in the year came a proclamation prohibiting all ministers of the Church from preaching, or teaching in any schools. Dr Wild preached " the funeral sermon of preaching " on the day before it became law " that none of the Church of England should dare either to preach or to administer sacraments, teach school, etc., on pain of imprisonment or exile." It was for Evelyn " the mournfullest day that in my life I had seen, or the Church of England herself since the Reformation; to the great rejoicing of both Papist and Presbyterian." And he adds, " Myself,

wife and some of our family received the communion; God make me thankful who hath hitherto provided for us the food of our souls as well as bodies! The Lord Jesus pity our distressed Church, and bring back the captivity of Sion."

The food of the soul. So Evelyn always thought of the blessed Sacrament; it was to him the stay of his spiritual life. When he records that he has been able to receive the blessed Sacrament it is rarely without some expression of profound thankfulness and joy. He is anxious that all those for whom he has any measure of responsibility shall share what he himself so prizes; he instructs and prepares his son for his first communion, and lest he should have omitted any matter by inadvertence takes him to Dr Peter Gunning for a final instruction; and he shows a like solicitude when his daughter first approaches the altar.

But there were long periods, even when the Church was not being actively persecuted, when reception of the holy communion was not possible; the weekly communion which Evelyn knew to have been the custom of the primitive Church was an almost forgotten ideal. For those times he compiled that method of "mental communion" which was lately printed with an introduction by Dr Frere as *A Devotionarie Book*. The method follows closely the structure of the liturgy, with the necessary alterations for private use and with many devout aspirations. We should say spiritual communion rather than mental, but the Church of Evelyn's day had lost touch with the vernacular of Western devotion and the individual Churchman fashioned his own idiom.

The little book, of which he had tested the method, was given by Evelyn at the Restoration to Margaret Blagge, that youthful maid of honour who amid all the vileness of the Restoration Court, and untouched by it either in spirit or in reputation, maintained a life of almost continuous devotion. Evelyn's pathetic entry in the Diary when she died, after three years of most happy marriage to Sidney Godolphin, and his later *Life of Margaret Godolphin*, disclose the depth and tenderness of a friendship founded in a common faith and practice of devotion. He had been her spiritual guide, though the Dean of Hereford was her confessor; she shared his intense devotion to the blessed Sacrament, and, like him, had spared no pains to bring others to share it.

In the perilous years others might bow before the storm and accept the deprivations imposed by the civil power; Evelyn at all risks would provide for himself and his household, and even communicate in public in face of the show of armed force. "Where shall we now receive the viaticum in safety?" he asks, in a letter to Jeremy Taylor. In 1656 he went up to London to receive the blessed Sacrament when the Church of England was "reduced to a chamber and conventicle, so sharp was the persecution," and again at Christmas to Dr Wild's lodgings, where he rejoiced to find so full an assembly of devout and sober Christians. It was at the Christmas of 1657 that he went to the altar of Exeter chapel in face of the soldiers, and was afterwards arrested by them, to be told that the Prayer Book service was but the Mass in English, and to be dismissed with much pity of his ignorance. In the next year there were celebrations of the holy communion in private houses, and collections were made for priests in prison, "the Church now in dens and caves of the earth." The death-rate of the clergy had risen on account of the great hardships which some of the deprived priests had suffered; and there were very few ordinations in secret to make good the losses. Evelyn records that he brought a young Frenchman of the Sorbonne to a full consent to the Church of England for doctrine and discipline, and procured his ordination by the Bishop of Meath, then in great want by the alienation of his stipend.

Yet at last it seemed that the tyranny was overpast, or nearly. The Protector was borne to his grave, with a superb funeral and little show of sorrow, and a few months later Evelyn notes a wonderful and sudden change in the face of the public. For the moment there was anarchy and confusion; Evelyn doubted whether the change had not come too late, "the poor Church of England breathing as it were her last, so sad a face of things had overspread us." But churchmen began to lift up their heads again, and dared to assemble; Evelyn records a cheerful supper with a number of devout and learned divines, firm confessors and excellent persons, of whom most became bishops. Soon it became possible to communicate in church. The faithful remnant had kept the flame of devotion alight in many a sheltered corner, and at Paris there had always been a fire at which the exiles warmed themselves while they awaited return. At the Restoration Evelyn's father-in-

law, Sir Richard Browne, came back from Paris, where in the Residency chapel he had maintained for nineteen years the liturgy and offices of the Church, so that English divines used to argue for the visibility of the Church from that chapel and congregation. On the 8th of July, 1660, Evelyn notes, "From henceforth was the liturgy publicly used in our churches, whence it had been for so many years banished," consecrations and ordinations began to be held in Westminster Abbey, and altars were again set altar-wise in the parish churches.

The Church was free again. But almost at once new dangers confronted her. Evelyn was now much about the King's person, and had good reason to deplore the looseness of the times, fearing God's judgment against the ungrateful and vicious nation and Court. But he found, to his comfort, Oxford herself again, and the chapels beautified, though he thought the new altar-piece at All Souls "too full of nakeds for a chapel." The Restoration certainly had its oddities, as when Dr Fell, that worthy, rough and zealous man, preached before his Majesty in blank verse.

A day spent with Christopher Wren and others surveying the decay of St Paul's issued in their resolution to build it anew with a noble cupola. Those were spacious days in which so great an undertaking might be settled upon as part of a day's work. For the moment the day's work seemed to be lost, for less than a week later began the Great Fire, in which the already tottering walls and stones of St Paul's "flew like granados"; but the resolution stood, and the dome of St Paul's testifies to it.

In 1672 fresh troubles arose. The English Church has always had to defend herself upon two fronts, and the sectaries being routed she had now to meet the growing boldness of the papists. The bishops, Gunning especially, were moved to preach at Court on the duty of steadfastness to the Church, for the Duke of York was no longer worshipping in the royal chapels. Smouldering resentment against the papists was fanned into flame by the villainy of Titus Oates, whom Evelyn distrusted from the first. Evelyn's moderation seems at this time to have encouraged the papists to have hopes of him, for the Spanish ambassador asked him to dinner and engaged him in conversation; but Evelyn found him very ignorant in religion and unable to defend any point in controversy, though he was far from being fierce.

Evelyn had the advantage of hearing many sermons from bishops at Whitehall, but he was usually a lenient judge of humbler preachers elsewhere. He notes that in his parish church " our new curate preached, a pretty hopeful young man, yet somewhat raw, newly come from college, full of Latin sentences, which in time will wear off." But he found unprofitable both a strange preacher who " used Bishop Andrewes's method, full of logical divisions, in short and broken periods and Latin sentences, now quite out of fashion in the pulpit, which is grown into a far more profitable way of plain and practical discourses," and another young man who preached " after the presbyterian manner and repetition."

With the accession of James II the morals and manners of the Court were mended. But it became clear that the new troubles were dangerously increasing; Evelyn saw " the new pulpit set up in the popish oratory at Whitehall for the Lent preaching, Mass being publicly said, and the Romanists swarming at Court with greater confidence than had ever been seen in England since the Reformation, so as everybody grew jealous to what this would tend." At the magnificent solemnity of the coronation there was no Sacrament, to the great sorrow of the people, and at the opening of Parliament Evelyn noticed that the King gave assurance of his care of *your* religion. Nevertheless Evelyn looked on the suppression of Monmouth's rebellion as a signal deliverance; its success would have meant the ruin of the Church and the Government, its defeat gave a fair prospect of tranquillity for the future. But a view of some private papers which the King had lent to Mr Pepys, from which it appeared that Charles II had long been a papist by conviction, led Evelyn to conclude that " the emissaries and instruments of the Church of Rome will never rest until they have crushed the Church of England, as knowing that alone to be able to cope with them." Yet he greatly preferred James's honest avowal of his religion to Charles's politic concealment. A little later the news of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes and its cruel sequel of persecution confirmed his distrust. But, dining with the Archbishop of York, he met one of another temper, " Peter Walsh, that Romish priest so well known for his moderation, professing the Church of England to be a true member of the Catholic Church; he is used to go to our public prayers without scruple, and did not acknowledge the Pope's infallibility, only primacy of order."

Evelyn refused to seal a licence to a printer to print missals and other Roman books, on the ground that Acts of Parliament made the printing illegal. All engines, he found, were now at work to bring in popery. His Majesty began to silence and suspend divers excellent divines for preaching against popery. Evelyn saw and sententiously regretted the dedication of the splendid royal chapel at Whitehall, which became a place of resort to hear the Italian singing, with much crowding and little devotion. It was some consolation to him that though the papists now got all the preferments not one considerable proselyte was made, and that the bishops, some of whom were afterwards Non-jurors, were very bold in preaching steadfastness to the English Church. The patience of the people became exhausted at last, and with the acquittal of the seven bishops and the rabbling of Roman Catholic chapels the priests and Jesuits of the Court took flight to the Continent, whither the King soon followed them.

The Revolution found Evelyn getting on in years, and though he was still much occupied in public business his comments on current events lost their old vigour, he was less elated and less depressed. He was a welcome visitor to Lambeth, where he had private and free discourse with Sancroft and other perplexed bishops. He dreaded the imposition of the oath of allegiance, yet when it was imposed and the Non-jurors deprived he did not follow them, but was soon found dining at Lambeth with his old friend Tillotson, the new Archbishop. Indifference was spreading in the Church, a natural reaction from the fierceness of long controversy; at Wotton, where succession to his brother's estate had brought him, the blessed Sacrament was now celebrated but four times in the year, and then with little reverence and many omissions. The entries in the Diary grow fewer and shorter as the indispositions of old age increase upon him ; the last are notes of two sermons which he heard three weeks before his death.

The world being what it was it was natural that Evelyn should sometimes have thought of a religious retirement from it; he had seen something of religious orders and congregations on the Continent. In 1659, when the troubles were at their worst, he communicated to another devoted layman, Robert Boyle—so pleasantly described in an epitaph as " Father of Chemistry and Brother of the Earl of Cork "—his " proposal for erecting a philosophic mathematic college."

The proposal was elaborated to the smallest detail. The aim of the society was to be "to preserve science and cultivate themselves"; the rule suggests a blend of a monastery with the Royal Society, of which both Evelyn and Boyle became members when it was founded a year or two later. Each member of this curious fraternity was to have a little house and garden, resembling a Carthusian cell; there was to be a pretty chapel with a chaplain, and a laboratory for the promotion of experimental knowledge. The rule of life and devotion was strict, though not so severe as to exclude music meetings; Evelyn doubtless remembered the music he had heard in religious houses of the Continent. Evelyn proposed to offer the opportunity of common life and study in a definitely religious setting, somewhat after the fashion of Little Gidding. But the college never got beyond the paper on which it was schemed so carefully, perhaps because the times mended and there was no longer so urgent a need for retirement from the world in which the Church was persecuted.

Shorthouse was greatly indebted to Evelyn's Diary for the picturesque setting of John Inglesant's years in Italy. There is also a parallel between Evelyn and Inglesant, the real and the imagined men of culture and experience, who saw much to admire in the Roman obedience but were loyal to their own, for Inglesant's admission to the sacraments in Italy is not represented as entailing any repudiation of the English Church. The Diary and the romance alike present a type of liberal culture conjoined with steadfast devotion of which the English Church has given many other examples. In his preface to that rare tract *Tyrannus* Evelyn quotes with approval that saying of Demosthenes that "Constancy is the Sum of all Perfection," and it is a quality which he notably exhibited.

E. Hermitage Day.

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## Christianity and History—II

### III

What can faith, and Christian faith in particular, say of the historical process? Man must have some theory of history, even if a depressing one. But usually men succeed

in affirming two convictions on which life depends—the intelligibility of the process, and the reality of its goal. Or, in more pious terms, providence and the golden age. These are most fully affirmed in the Christian belief in God and in the coming of his Kingdom. We believe that the elements of order which we see fragmentarily in the process are part of the great will of its Creator—even though our application of this belief to the affairs of the day may have to be " the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men . . . and setteth up over it the lowest of men " (Daniel iv, 18). Sin and the Fall have their place, perhaps in some Christian views of the world a too easily accepted place. But theirs is not the last word. For we also believe that God's redemptive will of righteousness and justice is somehow to be worked out.

So Christianity gives a deeper vividness to those convictions which all men endeavour to preserve. Christianity, however, is not merely an idea, but is represented by an institution. There arises, therefore, the problem of the relation of the Church to history. This may be described under three aspects: the Church is an event in history, an interpreter of history, and a foretaste of the goal of history. As an event in history it contains within itself the various kinds of historical succession which have been discussed already. The special problem of sacred history is that in it not only do the various kinds of succession appear in interaction, but there is combined with them the principle of unique and permanently true revelation, which may seem to challenge the whole significance of the historical process. Thus the series of saints and experts in the spiritual life is comparable to the series of artists. They cannot repeat, but in different ways approach the same reality. At the same time there is a progressive definition of the meaning of Christianity, a progressive effort to extend it over more areas, which suggests the history of science. The external history of the Church, again, reproduces the pattern of construction, decline, and reconstruction which characterizes the political-social history of which, as external history, it forms a part.

We claim, however, that we shall progress in Christ and change in Christ, but never progress beyond Him or change from Him. This claim to ultimacy is made in some form by any serious religion. To the Catholic it seems to give meaning to history, not to deny it. I have suggested that

movement forward, superseding the past, is not the only historical pattern. And we may ask in fact whether any further progress in that sense is possible in the religious sphere. Can there be any commandment more complete than that of perfect love? Can God be thought of as more than all-powerful and all-loving, or can He do more for our redemption than to send His Son to be for us obedient even unto death? Can any more divine help be needed than a Paraclete who is to guide us into all truth and a Lord who is to be with us always? Here is a claim which can always be rejected, but can never be improved upon.

There is no progress beyond Christ, but there is progress, or at least significant occurrence of events, in Christ. It is for this reason that I think Dodd overstresses the assertion that the Kingdom has come. The wealth of Christian devotion, Christian art, Christian thought, has added nothing in principle to perfection, but it has increased its manifestations. One cannot help feeling on reading Dodd's essay that important history ended with the Resurrection. For the Catholic it rather began. Hence the era of Christ replaces that of creation in Christian chronicles. The doctrines of the Church as the mystical Body of Christ and of the completion of Scripture in tradition have their place here. God the Word first manifested His utter perfection in a human life, subject to the limitations of time and space, of being one particular man. He now continues His Incarnation by His presence in us. We have added, of course, the destructive limitation of sin. But the original limitation is progressively removed as Christ is present in His Church at all times and all places. There are several sentimental hymns in our hymn-books which complain that the life of Christ was so long ago, "I would like to have been with him then." No; it is better to be a Christian in the twentieth century, after 1900 years of the life of Christ, than at any previous period. There was far more meaning than St Luke realized in his famous phrase "all that Jesus began both to do and to teach."

Little need be said here of the Church as interpreter of history, since the whole discussion deals with it in one way or another. We may remember, though, that the historical religions, of which Christianity is the chief, can claim to be the source of our most fruitful ideas, or at least of our really hopeful ideas, about history. The twin convictions of Providence and the coming Kingdom originated in Judaism

and, apparently independently, in Zoroastrianism. They have been continued in the Christian tradition and, with a one-sided emphasis on the former, in Mohammedanism. They are probably the basis of the secular faith in an intelligible world and an achievable goal on which are based the science and the social movements which to-day dominate the globe. Whether that development is religion's gift to the world, or the sign of religion's failure, remains to be seen.

## IV

The Church as foretaste of the goal of history—that leads us into the final topic of this discussion, its relation to our outlook on the future. Here I feel that Dodd and Tillich both leave us a little flat. Dodd comes too near to suggesting that the goal has been reached. Tillich is better with his insistence that the interpreter of history must be one who is taking his part in history, and the Christian interpreter must be one who is taking "Christian historical action or Church action," which he describes very well, in the crisis of his own day.[1] Yet the goal is allowed to be too primarily an idea—"the supra-historical unity of the ultimate meaning."[2] The problem is a very real one. For it is as futile to suggest that the Kingdom has come as it is depressing to suggest that it will not come, but merely be better understood. And while men in every age have thought of the great and final event as just ahead, the chances are that what did not take place in A.D. 50 or 950 is no more likely to occur in 1950. It is possible to return to the idealistic reinterpretation, in which the Kingdom becomes the eternal vision of God, and its coming on earth is turned into our departure for heaven. One will then argue that the apocalyptic framework preserved a certain character of the divine action—for instance, its immediacy. Yet one feels that the early Christian belief that God would do things in this world has been explained away.[3]

Perhaps a guide may be found in the words of our Lord, interpreted in the light of the position which we, or any generation, occupy in time. The former may be sum-

[1] *Kingdom of God and History*, pp. 128-131. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 142. [3] Even in so balanced an attempt as Baron von Hügel's "The Apocalyptic Element in the Teaching of Jesus," in *Essays and Addresses*, First Series, pp 119-143.

marized briefly. After all, Jesus did not say that the Kingdom had come; he said it was at hand (Mark i, 15). He also said that it had come upon his hearers, and that men were now entering into it (Matt. xii, 28; xi, 12). As presented in the Gospels, and elsewhere in the New Testament, the Kingdom, or Reign of God, has entered this world. It throws into it an advance colony of the coming age, so to speak, and for those who enter it life in it is both reward and source of power. It is not identical with the Church, even in the latter's most inchoate form of the personal disciples of our Lord; but the Church is its visible and sacramental manifestation.

With temerity, knowing the vastness of the subject, I offer some reflections on our position in time. The basic fact of which philosophers have to account is that time, unlike space, is irreversible. We can look to right and left, but we cannot in the same way remember and predict. This is less true of time the more it acquires the mathematical character of space. Astronomical events can be predicted, and so can such human events as are capable of reduction to an average. Mortality tables are the obvious example. They are sufficiently accurate to enable the life insurance business to be carried on, but do not claim perfection. Unexpected events, such as remarkable progress in medicine on one hand or a very destructive war on the other, would throw them out. The more freedom comes in, in other words (whatever the freedom of man may be), the less there is of real prediction. We cannot know what John Jones will be like in 1950, though we may guess. We may predict, when planning new roads or traffic schemes, the size of London or New York in 1975, but we don't really know. There are too many uncertain factors: the birth rate may fall more rapidly than we expect, or may rise instead of falling, while military necessities or changes in the economic structure may alter the status of the present metropolis. And who would venture to predict with real confidence what will be the general condition of life in England and America in 2000?

The old-time materialistic determinist would have said that human facts are as predictable as astronomical, only we do not possess sufficient information to predict them. This may be true, although I think not. In any case, our attitude towards future history is determined by the fact that it has not been predictable in the past, and is not now.

Consequently, while we can envisage particular future developments, such as progress in engineering, we can conceive of the future at large only (*a*) as a continuation, in its essential quality at least, of the present; or (*b*) in terms of the ultimate values of history. The common planning of men moves on the former plane; and everything else is eschatology. In other words, in front of us we can see only one event—much as the motorist is always in sight of the end of the road. We have seen many apocalypses in our day—the liberal dream of freedom, the Marxian dream of the co-operative commonwealth, the triumphant age of scientific convenience, the dominance of authoritarian nationalism, and others. In so far as each preserves some part of the all-encompassing vision of God's Kingdom, all are true. That is why all have been powerful. And all have a common eschatological character. Behind us we see the meaning of history—that is, its values, deployed in various imperfect manifestations. Ahead of us we see nothing but the meaning itself.

It will appear, therefore, that the apocalyptic framework, so far from being an obstacle, is the proper and only form for delivering a message about the quality of the future. This is especially true when the quality of the present is seen to differ so greatly from the ideal. There is perhaps no word in the recorded sayings of our Lord so relevant to the conditions of an age like ours as " When these things begin to come to pass, look up and lift up your heads; because your redemption draweth nigh " (Luke xxi, 28). Even before our discussions took their present form, there is evidence that the message of apocalyptic was thought of as both present and future. Gregory the Great is one of many writers who have seen in the calamities of their times the signs of the end:

> Shortly before the Gospel lesson which you have just heard, brethren [he says in an Advent sermon], the Lord says: Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and there shall be great earthquakes in diverse places, and pestilences and famines. Then, after some other things, he adds what you have just heard: There shall be signs in sun and moon and stars, and upon earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows. Now all of these we either see happening, or fear as shortly to occur. For as for nation rising against nation, and their distress troubling the earth—we see more of that in our times than we read of in books. You know how often we hear from various parts of the world that earth-

quakes have overwhelmed vast cities. We suffer pestilences incessantly. The signs in the sun and moon and stars we do not yet see openly; but that they are not far off we may gather from the changes in the air.[1]

A world was ending in Gregory's time, though not the world. It is interesting and encouraging that the man who thought of himself as preparing for the Last Judgment was one of the great founders of the next age. A different line was taken by a greater teacher of the Church, St Augustine, who boldly identified the Millennium of Revelation with the reign of saints and martyrs in the Church Militant.[2] St John, after all, knew what he meant when he wrote that he was living in a last hour (1 John ii, 18), and St Paul when he referred to Old Testament events as recorded for us "upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x, 11). It may be observed, by the way, that the word Eschaton, used by some modern writers as a term for the final events, does not occur in that sense in the New Testament. Eschaton, or rather its plural, *ta eschata*, is used for less solemn final states, such as that of the man whose last state was worse than his first (Luke xi, 26), or the heretics denounced in 2 Peter (ii, 20). The phrase that does occur in a positive sense is *ta tele*. After all, we are not interested in the condition of things which have come to an end, but in that of those which are in sight of their goal—the return of all things to perfection through Him from whom they took their origin, Christ the Word.

In conclusion a few requisites for a Christian theory of history may be listed. It must preserve the real character of finality in the Incarnation. Yet it must show that history "A.D." is not less, but more meaningful than that of the years "B.C." It must preserve the note of judgment on this age and of apocalyptic expectancy, yet at the same time maintain complete interest in human events simply as things that occur. Von Hügel wrote wisely on this topic:

> Certainly the religion of the Incarnation will be able consistently to despise Happenings, however lowly, and the study of Happenings, however minute, only if and when it does not sufficiently realize its own abiding implications and requirements, its rootedness in the Childhood at Nazareth and in the Cross on Calvary.[3]

[1] *Homiliæ in Evangelia*, 1. [2] *De Civitate Dei*, XX, 6-9. [3] *Essays and Addresses*, First Series, p. xvi.

It must hold the balance between the double future which lies before each of us—the future of our race on this planet, and the totality of each individual life, here and hereafter. It will, I believe, offer a real reinforcement to our faith in the life to come. In God's Kingdom on earth we taste delights which only in heaven can be complete, and in our service of God and man on earth raise problems which only heaven can solve.

To such a theory the authors from whose writings this discussion started have made real contributions. We may especially appreciate in Tillich the significant articulation of all history, and in Dodd the vivid consciousness of its centre in the life, death, and resurrection of our Lord. In the Eucharist, as the latter has done well to stress, we stand in the presence of past, present, and future. The living, dying, and ascended Lord is there with us. There we behold that second and glorious coming again for which all true Christians look. History finds its goal when it raises us through temporal goods (and temporal evils) to realms of reality which are eternal—and perhaps the final word of history and all its works is simply this, that the pure in heart shall see God.

E. R. Hardy, Jun.

(*Concluded.*)

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## The Corporate Element in Private Prayer

We are confronted with an urgent task both in the realm of mystical theology and in that of even the simplest teaching concerning prayer. The age in which we live has seen the development of individualism past the stage of conscious acceptance into subconscious conditioning. Monadism as a philosophic theory may not be very important, but the ordinary man is lonely. He does not feel any organic connexion with the society in which he lives. The suburb dweller or the factory hand feels more like a match in a box than a twig on a tree. But the nature of man is such that when the spiritual disintegration of society has reached this stage he seeks desperately to satisfy his spiritual desire for communion by all kinds of inadequate means. A reaction sets in, and man seeks to escape from his intolerable loneli-

ness. He tends to try to compensate for what he has lost in the depths of his soul by shallow forms of external association. The whole structure of modern life is coloured by these attempts of man to escape from the isolation in which his individualism has entrapped him. Many of these attempts are merely blind reaction to loneliness. " The more we get together the happier we shall be." There is perhaps nothing more pathetic in the whole human situation to-day than the sight of men, condemned to solitary confinement by the prison walls of their own souls, trying to convince themselves that they are really in communion with their brethren.

Some of these attempts, however, are far more than mere reaction: they have positive elements which we cannot safely ignore, but they are not enough. Whatever we may think of the theory and practice of communism, it does bear witness to a necessary truth. Man is not an isolated economic unit. The world is God's board: we are meant to feed at it as brethren. So, too, fascism, with all its perversions, in the theory of the corporative state which it has adopted, has a true insight into some of the relationships of the different elements in industry.

These attempts are also to be found in the religious sphere. The Buchman Group Movement, for all its callow inadequacies, has at least appreciated the fact that religion is more than a private matter. At a deeper level the whole renewed interest in the study of ecclesiology is likewise a witness to our attempt to escape from our loneliness.

Most important, perhaps, of all these attempts is the Liturgical Movement. Let it be quite clear that what I have to say is in no sense a destructive criticism. The work of the Liturgical Movement is urgent and necessary, but by itself it does not go deep enough. The time was indeed ripe for the Church to be reminded that corporate worship is intended to be corporate, but let us see where the movement leads us if we do not follow it through into the realm of private prayer.

The great devotional tradition in which we have most of us been brought up finds its culminating point in the Eucharist considered in terms of " my communion." The Liturgical Movement decapitates that tradition and makes it meaningless. If the Eucharist is removed from its position as the apex of an individualistic devotional tradition and placed (where it should be) at the centre of a corporate

church life, the devotional tradition which depended on it considered as " my communion " inevitably wilts. But that tradition cannot lightly be jettisoned, for it contains almost all we know of the devotional life. All our methods of meditation, all our insights into the work of contemplation and the prayer of silence, all the mystics of the West, are part and parcel of it. If we ignore all this we are rejecting our spiritual ancestry and cutting ourselves off from those who still have power to speak to the depths of our spiritual natures.

Yet the tradition as we have received it will not do. It does not speak to our condition. This fact does not lie merely at the door of the Liturgical Movement; many of the most sensitive souls of our age are troubled for quite other reasons. The point at which God speaks to them most clearly is in their relation to society. Their belief in the sovereignty of God has led them out of the shallow individualism of " business is business," " A man's religion is his own affair," " Religion is a private matter between a man and his Maker." They have seen with terrible vividness that God is Lord of the whole of life and that every phase of social, political, economic and international affairs is under His judgment. They have not lost the sense of penitence for private sins, but their sense of the sinfulness of their share in the injustice of the social and economic order has opened an area of penitence to them which has largely been ignored in the past. So, too, in the whole realm of theology the individualism of the past is giving place to a much needed return to the essentially corporate nature of the Christian faith. We are beginning to realize that such phrases as " in Christ " imply the whole sense of community. But apart from the Liturgical Movement, our devotional life stands very much where it did.

The Social Gospellers, perhaps more especially those o America, have until recently had an individualistic theology and an individualistic devotional life, which they tried to apply to society like a poultice. The individualistic theology has begun to be replaced, but the individualistic devotional life is still largely dominant and it must be confessed that the more recent attempts to replace it are shallow and thin, lacking the depth and insight of the older tradition.

Thus we are faced with a situation in which those who have come either out of the Evangelical tradition or out of the Catholic tradition of the Counter Reformation find themselves torn between a new sense of the corporate nature of

our religion and an individualistic devotional tradition which does not speak to their deepest spiritual needs.

Many of those who have gone farthest in their study of mysticism and the life of prayer are caught most deeply in the tragedy. Their meditations, the moments which have cut most deeply into their souls, the ways in which they have been drawn most fully into communion with God, have become inadequate for them. They cannot use the prayers and methods which used to be the mainstay of their devotional life. The great mystics and spiritual teachers of the past who used to speak to them with words of fire seem now to touch only one part of their nature and to leave unaffected those areas of their being which they feel the greatest need to bring under the mastery of God. It is as if a curtain had been placed between them and their spiritual guides, so that the voices they used to hear speaking with clarity and decision are now muffled and indistinct.

The temptation in such a situation is to try to build a new spirituality, or at least to look back only to those in the past who, in some measure, seem to speak to our need, and to ignore or even condemn those who do not. But if we are not to emasculate and impoverish our devotional life we must not thus jettison the major part of our devotional tradition.

Much of the difficulty, I believe, arises from our reading into the individualistic language of the mystics a conscious monadism which they, if they had been acquainted with it, would have vigorously repudiated. St Teresa, for example, could afford to write in individualistic terms, for her whole life was rooted and grounded in a community life. We too easily attribute an individualistic religion to those who wrote in individualistic language and forget that behind their private devotions there was a liturgical life which was assumed, and a sense of organic community which was not even questioned. When we, living in a disintegrated society which has lost all sense of organic community, and living in a Church where liturgical life needs to be restored, attempt to understand them, we usually fall into the error of interpreting their individualistic language in terms of our individualistic environment. Thus what was in their mouths a valid insistence on the uniqueness of the vocation of each human soul within the family of God becomes in our ears a quite invalid idea that we stand before God not merely in the loneliness of uniqueness but in the loneliness of separation.

I am not here dealing with such modern writers as Aldous Huxley and Charles Morgan, who, quite evidently, have so misread the mystics as to make utter nonsense of their message, but of the good average practising Christian who goes to them in a sincere effort to find guidance for his spiritual life. Unless I am much mistaken, nine-tenths of such people miss their real message because they have no knowledge in their own experience of the assumed, organic, corporate background out of which they wrote. This ignorance of the external corporate background of their prayer leads many modern readers to fail likewise to appreciate an even deeper sense in which their prayer was corporate. For to them not only was it assumed as necessary that to be in Christ involved being in the Church, but they knew and experienced the converse: to be united with Christ was to be united with all the faithful in His mystical Body. Their experience of the presence of Christ—the New Man, in the soul—was indeed highly personal, but in Him they were united with the whole creation. This note in their message leads many modern readers to make the mistake of thinking of them as pantheists as well as individualists. But while many people find God in nature, and the pantheists think to find Him there exclusively, and confine the Creator to His creation, the characteristic experience of the mystics is conversely to find the creation in the Creator. Beside the terrific sense of the divine sovereignty involved in this approach, the stress on God's transcendence in current Barthian theology appears almost insipid. Their corporate sense was thus rooted and grounded in their worship of God, as well as forming the background of it.

The task, then, which it seems to me lies before us is to reinterpret our devotional tradition in consciously corporate terms. In the days when an integrated society could be assumed, it was not necessary at every stage in our private devotions to underline the fact that our religion is corporate. In our present situation it is a desperate necessity, for if we attempt to worship God in isolation we shall not worship "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" but the mirror image of ourselves. Father Andrew, S.D.C., has written: "There is really one prayer to God and that is the one prayer of the one Son to the Father; our prayer is only real prayer inasmuch as it is taken into that prayer." But we can only be in Christ by being in His Body the Church.

We can only join in the one prayer if we pray as members of the Church. In the secrecy of the inner chamber, when we have closed the door, we still pray "*Our* Father," not "*My* Father." We never stand before God alone. We do indeed stand before Him in the uniqueness of our vocation, but not in the loneliness of isolation. Uniqueness is, in fact, only possible within an organic relationship. The position of each individual twig on a tree is unique because they are all joined together; unattached matches in a box can be shaken about and no individual has a position which is uniquely its own. So we shall preserve the piercingly personal demands the mystics make upon us, only in so far as we gain a sense that our private prayer is to be thoroughly corporate.

It is not the purpose of this article to attempt to outline what this will involve, either in the realm of mystical theology or in the teaching of the art of prayer to ordinary Church members. But it will certainly mean that nearly all the books which are usually placed in the hands of those who desire to enter more deeply into the life of prayer will have to be rewritten. The gulf between private devotion and liturgical worship must be bridged, methods of meditation must draw people away from a lonely search for God, and lead them to a response to the Love of the God who is the Father of their brethren. Intercession must cease to be regarded in isolation as a purely outgoing traffic, the need for receptiveness must be taught, and our interdependence one on another in prayer must be re-emphasized.

Perhaps a reference to the contemporary scene may bring home this point. What of prayer in war-time, even public prayer? Do we pray as members of a Catholic and Universal Church? Do we pray naturally and inevitably for our enemies as an obvious Christian duty? Do we think at all of the Germans who are praying for us? If our public worship falls short in these respects, it is singularly unlikely that the private prayers of Christians will be more truly corporate and Christian.

It may well be that the task of which I have written cannot be accomplished until men are cured of asking the question: "What is the task of the Church?" For as long as men regard the Body of Christ as an organ for the performance of some function, they will inevitably fail to see that to be "in Christ," in His Body, is to be sought for, for its own sake; that mankind only fulfils the purpose for which it was

created in so far as it becomes the Church of God, the Body of Christ, the family of our Heavenly Father, and that thus corporate worship is of the essence of the Christian life, and private prayer which is not corporate is not Christian.

MICHAEL BRUCE.

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## Kierkegaard and Marx

WHEN, in 1851, Kierkegaard collapsed in the streets of Copenhagen, Karl Marx in London was enduring all the miseries of an exile's lot. The Dane was born five years before the German, but it was the same year, 1841, which saw Kierkegaard present his thesis on *The Concept of Irony* and Marx receive his doctorate for a study of the atomic philosophy of Democritus and Epicurus. Socrates as the critic of contemporary life and materialism as the basis on which society must be reconstructed—each man had chosen already his task. They were, for all we know, unknown to each other by name throughout the three decades in which their careers ran parallel, and, had they met, each would have recognized in the other his antithesis. For Kierkegaard would have shrunk with horror from a man who proposed to substitute the class for the individual, and Marx would have dismissed Kierkegaard as typical of bourgeois ideology in its most pitifully decadent condition.

Yet in one point they were agreed: their analysis of contemporary society; and the year 1848 was to both a year of crisis and revelation. It showed that European culture was in the throes of dissolution and to be viewed only with despair. For Kierkegaard chaos drew terribly near in 1848; Social Democracy shrieked "Equality!" and the powers in Church and State trembled and negotiated instead of ruling in God's name. To Marx it brought the final evidence that trust could no longer be put in the faint-hearted bourgeoisie, and that his mission was to arm the proletariat with intellectual weapons for the coming struggle.

"Dissolution" was the word which each saw written across the face of Europe. For Marx the root of all evils was the separation of the producer from the instruments of

production and the polarization of these two as labour and capital. Where once two men met, now only two rival functions clashed and warred. Those masses of hungry men with only their labour to sell, and finding that because its price was too high they must become slave-holders and sell the labour of their wives and children; this proletariat uprooted from the past, with neither culture nor country, and with no obligations to society except those of the weekly pay-sheet—this was the new and dreadful form of human life with which the nineteenth century had to reckon. The proletariat is " a class of civil society which is not a class of civil society, an estate which is the dissolution of all estates, a sphere . . . which has been completely deprived of its human privileges. This dissolution of society as a particular estate is—the proletariat."

For Kierkegaard, human life in his day has lost all depth, it has become anonymous and irresponsible; the King keeps silence and the press rules. Typical of this inner dissolution is not the wage-slave, but the idle bourgeois, the æsthete who has no task to perform and therefore makes it his aim to enjoy life. He is able to extract from each event a threefold pleasure: first when he plans some satisfaction in advance, secondly in the actual moment of enjoyment, and thirdly when he revives in memory the images of his pleasurable experience. His one rule for life is to avoid entanglements and obligations, to take and not to give, to seek the " interesting " and to shun " boredom " as one would shun the devil.

In this universal dissolution, however, one stable phenomenon is to be discerned, for Kierkegaard the mass and for Marx a class. The collectivity is to one a demon and to the other a god. Marx was tyrannical when he confronted individuals; he reserved his love for the working-class as its fortunes were mirrored in those blue-books and inspectors' reports piled on his desk in the British Museum. He enunciated the law that " man is what he produces," that " consciousness does not determine life, but life determines consciousness." He saw history as, like nature, careless of the individual and concerned only for the species; the human race fell asunder for him, not into a multitude of persons, but into two great warring groups. He looked with awe on the mass-forces at work in factory and mine and market; they were the real makers of history, and religion, philosophy, and politics were but their by-products.

To Kierkegaard such a view of human life was sheer blasphemy and folly. He could never forgive Hegel for his cheap maxim: "The inner is as the outer and the outer as the inner"; to Marx that was a self-evident truth. Marx could become lyrical when he spoke of the proletariat; Kierkegaard was roused to fury by mention of the masses. *Vox populi vox Dei*—when the *vox populi* of Jerusalem had cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Society was the sure refuge of the scoundrel; it slandered with a thousand tongues, and each one felt himself innocent! Photography, making possible for the many what had once been the privilege of the few who could afford to sit for a painter, seemed to him a presage of the coming day when one portrait would suffice for the whole race, for all would be conformed to a single type!

For each there was but one possibility of deliverance—through despair. Marx looked on the growing misery of the workers, relegated to the "reserve army of unemployed" after they had hired their children to the mills, and saw in this very misery the one hope of salvation. When the situation of the proletariat had become so intolerable that there was no longer anything to fear, they would revolt and bring down the whole capitalist structure. "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working-men of all countries, unite!"

Chains only to lose and a world to win! For Kierkegaard it was to just such a situation that life must bring the individual if ever he is to be saved. The hour must come when a man has to choose between, on the one hand, duty, social responsibility, and faith in God, and, on the other, suicide. Christianity, he said once, "is a radical cure," and men will accept it only as they learn that there is a "sickness unto death" which has them in its grip. Man, the proud rebel, must have his walls breached and his flag shot away before he is willing to bring out the keys of his castle to the King. One must find an abyss yawning at one's feet, and leap that abyss—into the love of God.

Kierkegaard's message was to the individual, a summons to him to come to himself at last in solitary reckoning with God. He spoke of himself as set at the pass of Thermopylæ to break up the vast mass of mankind and compel each to pass before God as an individual. He strove to rouse in his contemporaries a sense of personal responsibility, and to do it by bringing them face to face with Christ. For

Christ is to-day just the absolute demand that He was when He walked in Galilee and died on the Cross. Therefore he pleaded for a return to the Christian tradition in its purest and most severe form. Others, he said, had sought to make Christianity easy; his task was to make it difficult, to present it as something which must be chosen, at whatever cost to civilization and even, perhaps, to the extinction of the human race.

Yet he was not without a message to society. He bade Europe wait and pray for the coming of a Martyr-Prophet. The outline of this shadowy figure rose up before him out of the mass-enthusiasms of 1848 and his own rejection of them. "What the time needs," he said, "is not a genius, but a martyr," and he pictured the coming messenger of God as one whom the mass would slay, to repent over his dead body. "From now on it will not be prophets and judges who will come, to go on ahead so as to lead the race forward; but martyr will come after martyr, by their very revolt against this human invention 'progress' to force men backwards." The martyr was needed to do the work which a careless, worldly Church had ceased to do, and make men individuals before God. Was he to be this himself? The question tortured him for a long while, but at last he answered it in the negative; he could be witness and forerunner, but the Martyr-Prophet would be another.

Marx would have dismissed this hope as mere bourgeois phantasy, the self-deception of a dying class. To Kierkegaard's "Man, be thyself!" he would have opposed his slogan "Sink thyself in thy class!" Let a man cease to be Protestant or Catholic, artisan or teacher or shopkeeper, and be content to be but one more instance of the proletariat. Otto Rühle has summed up the doctrine thus: "Mankind will only be able to pursue its emancipatory ascent successfully, when it becomes competent to make every individual willing and able to bring his subjective scheme of life into harmony with the objective evolutionary scheme of society—when the private individual is wholly merged in the member of the species. Only the objectively socialized and subjectively communalized human being will be able to effect the emancipation of mankind, thus becoming master of his own fate" (*Karl Marx*, 66 *f.*).

"The individual" and "the class"—such are the conflicting symbols under which these two commanding figures stand. But for Kierkegaard the individual can only become

such as he accepts himself in the presence of God, while for Marx it is the glory of the proletariat that it has learned to dispense with God. "Law, morality, religion, are to him so many bourgeois prejudices, behind which lurk in ambush just as many bourgeois interests." "No tasks are set to man which he cannot cope with."

The Martyr-Prophet has not come, and class and mass are more powerful among us than ever before. Our world has chosen Marx rather than Kierkegaard, and we can in a measure understand why that has happened. Kierkegaard said of himself that he was "spirit without body," and we have learned that none can serve the spirit truly who is not keenly alive to the fact that it is lodged in a body. We have come to see that even political action can be a medium for the service of God. But the more concerned we are to make a better world and the brighter our dreams of the classless society which is one day to be, the greater our need to pause sometimes and give heed to the protest of Kierkegaard, that beyond all our policies and systems, as within the soul of every man, is the secret place where God and the individual keep tryst.

E. L. Allen.

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## The Problem of "The Praise of Folly"

There is still much debate concerning even the main outlines of the development of modern Christianity. We are sometimes told that not only the Reformers but even the Puritans belong to the history of the Middle Ages, and that the modern spirit does not really make its appearance till the *Aufklärung*. But I am old-fashioned enough to believe that there is something significant in the division of the history of Europe and of the Church into an ancient period ending with the Roman empire, a middle age, and modern times dating approximately from the middle of the fifteenth century. Our problems to-day are rooted in the economic, social, and political changes of four hundred years ago, and in that triple awakening of the spirit of man—of his mind, his imagination, his conscience—that intellectual, æsthetic and spiritual re-birth which we call the Renaissance and the Reformation. If that be so, then the peculiar position which Erasmus holds in the movement stamps him

as one of the true fathers of the *Neuzeit*. Even though he remained in the old Church when Luther broke completely away, to the point of identifying the Roman pontiff with Anti-Christ, Erasmus and not Luther is the creator of the reformed Church. For his "Philosophy of Christ" is a creative attempt to integrate the rediscovered wisdom of the classics, and the interests and searchings of modern man, with the teachings of Jesus and the traditions of the Church—an attempt in which Luther and Calvin were hardly interested but one which is the very foundation of modern Christianity, the Christianity of Grotius, Butler, Coleridge, Baron von Hügel and Albert Schweitzer. I wish, in this connexion, to consider briefly one of the more difficult expressions of Erasmus' religious philosophy, the *Moriæ Encomium*, the point of which, as it seems to me, has been very largely misunderstood.

*The Praise of Folly* was written in 1509, just after Erasmus' return from Italy, while, as he tells us in a later letter, he was waiting in More's house for the arrival of his library and was suffering from an attack of lumbago. One is apt therefore to get the impression that the work is merely a *jeu d'esprit*, a pastime; and Erasmus himself seems to favour the view in his preface. Yet in the body of the work itself he says more truly: "I have prais'd Folly, but not altogether foolishly."[1] It may be said, not without justice, that Erasmus writes with no unified, consistent literary plan. He seems to let his pen control his thinking, to allow a word or a phrase to set him off on a new line or to bring him back to tracks which the reader imagined he had left for good. He starts with one conception of folly and ends with its opposite; she is at first wholly reprehensible and yet finally turns out to be not only a virtue but a Christian virtue. It is not surprising therefore that critics have sometimes concluded that Erasmus had no standards by which to assign praise or blame, that his work is just a clever jumble. Such a view I believe to be false. Back of all the fooling and inconsequence is Erasmus' Christian Humanism, his "Philosophy of Christ," that fruitful combination of respect for the critical philosophy of the classics and for the gospel of love preached and lived by Jesus. *Folly* indeed is not a constant; she is at one time the unwisdom and wicked-

[1] *The Praise of Folly*, translated by John Wilson, edited by Mrs P. S. Allen (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), p. 4.

ness which wisdom abhors, and at another the irrationality which saves wisdom from being mere calculation or pedantry; by an amazing *tour de force* Erasmus transforms her at the end into a divine, a Christian folly, with excellent biblical support but to the rueful dismay of his critics. If, however, we separate the various strands in the composite figure of Folly we shall see how much colour and variety they lend to the pattern of the Philosophy of Christ.

Erasmus' satire on unwisdom may perhaps be best appreciated if we have some conception of the circle of ideas in which he was moving. When he wrote, "Folly" literature was very much the mode of the moment. The late medieval craze for running a species to death, the cult of the rose for instance, or the dance of death, was producing an abundant supply of folly literature, of which the most significant examples were the *Narrenschiff* of Sebastian Brant (1494) and its English relative *The Ship of Fools*, a free translation and anglification of the German work, by a monk in the convent of St Mary Ottery in Devon, Alexander Barclay, and printed in the very year in which Erasmus' own work was composed. Erasmus, of course, did not read the English version since he did not understand the English language.

Barclay started from the conception of wisdom and folly in the Wisdom literature of the Old Testament and Jesus' slight references to it. In the back of his mind was the thought of the fool of Psalm xiv, who said in his heart, "There is no God," because he preferred a godless universe in which he could with impunity "eat up the people as bread"; or the fool of Proverbs xiv, 16, "who rageth and is confident"; or he who stored up much goods and took his ease, but to whom God said, "Thou fool" (Luke xii, 20). In the Wisdom literature the foolish man is described as *pethi*, simple, ignorant, easily misled; or as *kesil*, heavy, stupid, obstinate; or as *evil*, rashly, wantonly foolish. He may be *baar*, coarse or brutish, or *nabal*, churlish and ignoble. The emptiness and unworthiness of folly are employed in one group of words, and its unsavoury and corrupt character, without wholesome salt of reason and understanding, in another (Proverbs i, 7). The Bunyan-like picture of Madam Folly in Proverbs ix, 13-18, stands out in bold contrast with the picture of Wisdom and her seven-pillared palace at the opening of the same chapter.[1]

[1] W. T. Davison, "Hebrew Wisdom" in Peake's *Commentary on the Bible* (London: Jack, 1919), p. 344.

This tradition appears in Barclay's " Sermon or erudicion or wysdome both to wyse men and folys," in which he declares that

> He that delyteth in godly sapience
> And it to obtayn puttyth his besynes
> Aboue all folys shall haue preemynence
> And in this worlde haue honour and rychesse
> Or a worthy crowne in hevyns blessydnesse
> Or els bothe welthe here and after ioy and blysse
> Where as a fole of bothe the two shall mysse.[1]

For him Folly is another name for sin, both deadly and venial, from " covetyse and prodigalyte," " disordred and veneryous loue," through gluttony and drunkenness, down to the " superflue curyosyte of men."[2] When Erasmus gets round to quoting the Wisdom literature he is already trying to present Folly in a favourable light, so that he does not utilize the darker portions of the traditional picture in the Bible. Yet his Folly, in the earlier sections of the book at least, has a general correspondence with that of Barclay. She is designated as the daughter of Riches and Youth, she was suckled by Drunkenness and Ignorance.[3] As Barclay attacks the foolishness of " inprofytable and vayne " prayers, recommending men to say their

> Pater noster with devoute herte and mynde
> For therein is all that is needful to mankynde,[4]

so Erasmus attacks unethical prayer to the Saints.[5] But Barclay is, of course, a thorough medievalist; his *Weltanschauung* is the medieval poet's compromise between Catholicism and a watery edition of Roman paganism, of whose pantheon the only gods remaining are Fortune with her wheel and Venus-Cupid. He does not hesitate to rank

> Seneke the sage with Cato and *Arture*.[6]

To pass from this to Erasmus' work, composed by one who had also been a monk, and written in the very same year, is to pass into another world. Wisdom and Folly have dropped their biblical robes and become the Reason and Passion of the classics—even if the background is more Roman than Greek. " According to the definition of the

[1] *The Ship of Fools*, translated by A. Barclay, edited by T. H. Jamieson (Edinburgh: Paterson, 1894), p. 119.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 29, 79, 92, 129.
[3] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, pp. 158 ff.
[4] Barclay, *op. cit.*, p. 140.
[5] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
[6] Barclay, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

Stoics, Wisdom is nothing else than to be governed by Reason; and on the contrary, Folly, to be giv'n up to the will of our Passions; that the life of man might not be altogether disconsolate and hard to away with, of how much more Passion than Reason has Jupiter compos'd us? putting in, as one would say, 'scarce half an ounce to a pound.'"[1] "Why is Cupid always pourtrai'd like a Boy, but because he is a very Wagg, and can neither do nor so much as think any thing sober? Why Venus ever in her prime, but because of her affinity with me?"[2] It is the world of Jupiter and Venus we are in, not that of Zeus and Aphrodite, but we are out of the medieval phantasmagoria; and folly is that of the philosophers rather than of the Bible.

The unwisdom which Erasmus satirizes is thus disorder of the mind and of the will, it is ignorance and stupidity, it is selfishness and over-passionateness. He ridicules the pedantry of classical scholars and of theologians;[3] the search for long pedigrees and the vagaries of the hunting set;[4] the worldliness of the papal curia and the crime of war.[5] Part of the last-mentioned indictment is worth quoting as an example of the seriousness of his satire on unwisdom. "Is not War the very Root and Matter of all fam'd Enterprises? And yet what more foolish than to undertake it for I know not what trifles, especially when both Parties are sure to lose more than they get by the bargain? . . . This thing of Warring is no part of Philosophy but manag'd by Parasites, Pandars, Thieves, Cut-throats, Plow-men, Sots, Spendthrifts and such other Dregs of Mankind, not Philosophers." True to his prime conviction that it is the life which matters, Erasmus concludes that Folly is truly worshipped, even if men have not built her a formal temple. "Then do I consider myself most religiouslie worshipp'd, when everywhere, as 'tis generally done, men embrace me in their Minds, express me in their Manners and represent me in their Lives; which worship of the saints is not so ordinary among Christians."[6]

"When her cymbals have drawn an audience she forgets her part, and Folly speaks like wisdom," writes Professor Preserved Smith.[7] This must, I suppose, be granted for

[1] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, p. 31. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 28. [3] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, pp. 104 and 113. [4] *Ibid.*, pp. 86 and 77. [5] *Ibid.*, pp. 143 ff. and 42-43. [6] *Ibid.*, p. 97. [7] Preserved Smith, *Erasmus, A Study of his Life, Ideals, and Place in History* (New York: Harper, 1923), p. 123.

the portions we have already analysed, where Folly is made to condemn unwisdom although she herself personifies unwisdom. But it is truer to say that Folly is a composite figure; she is not only unwisdom but confessedly also "good nature" and "common sense."[1] Our problem is rather to discover how it was possible for Erasmus to unite such different characteristics in one figure. And light is shed on the question by two related facts, the social phenomenon of the court jester and the illustrations with which "Fool" literature was provided. The wood-cuts made for Brant's *Ship of Fools*, like the marginal drawings of Hans Holbein the Younger for *The Praise of Folly*, represent Folly in the motley of the court fool. Now, even though the Vice or Iniquity in the interlude sometimes wore motley,[2] the use of a figure dressed in court motley to represent sin and wickedness, as in the case of *The Ship of Fools*, was far from appropriate; for the jester was not a monster of iniquity but at worst a licensed buffoon. But in the case of Erasmus' work there was a singular fitness in this method of illustration. The court fool was not only a mirth-provider but a critic of royalty itself. One recalls the office of the Fool in *King Lear* :

> Fool (*to* Kent). Prithee, tell him, so much the rent of his land comes to: he will not believe a fool.
> Lear. A bitter fool.
> Fool. Dost thou know the difference, my boy, between a bitter fool and a sweet fool?
> Lear. No, lad; teach me.
> Fool. That lord that consell'd thee
> To give away thy land,
> Come place him here by me;
> Do thou for him stand:
> The sweet and bitter fool
> Will presently appear;
> The one in motley here,
> The other found out there.
> Lear. Dost thou call me fool, boy?
> Kent. This is not altogether fool, my lord. (I, 4.)

Erasmus was quite conscious that his Folly was not simply wickedness and unreason, that she was also the hidden wisdom of the court fool. He writes that princes delight to have their fools, not only to keep them merry, but because

[1] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, pp. 37, 64; *cf.* p. 75.

[2] *Shakespeare's England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), ii, 256.

they perform the functions that the interested politicians, the wise men of the court, prefer not to perform. "This is found by experience among my Fools, that not onely Truths but even open reproaches are heard with pleasure; so that the same thing which, if it came from a wise man's mouth might prove a capital Crime, spoken by a Fool is receiv'd with delight."[1]

And so it comes about that Erasmus' Folly, rigged out in the motley of the court fool, is not wholly fool or knave after all. She is that merry, that humane spirit which keeps Erasmus' religious philosophy so sane and sympathetic. His wise man, the philosopher of Christ, is one who gleans truth from the past as guidance for the present, one who is stirred by the teaching of Socrates and challenged by the Cross of Christ. But he would be capable of becoming as much a pedant as his scholastic predecessors—were it not for his "folly." "If Prudence depends upon experience, to whom is the honour of that name more proper? To the Wiseman, who partly out of modesty and partly distrust of himself, attempts nothing; or the Fool, whom neither Modesty, which he never had, nor Danger which he never considers, can discourage from any thing? The Wiseman has recourse to the Books of the Antients, and from thence picks out nothing but subtilities of words. The Fool, in undertaking and venturing on the business of the world, manifests, if I mistake not, the true Prudence."[2] "Invite a Wise man to a Feast and he'll spoil the company, either with Morose silence or troublesome Disputes. Take him out to Dance, and you'l swear 'a Cow would have don't better.'"[3]

It is "Folly" which, as the "will to live," breaks down the Stoic apathy which leads to suicide. Without our passions and affections we have no real humanity; Seneca and the Stoics set up "a stony semblance of a man, void of all Sense and common feeling of Humanity."[4] It was not so hard for Cato or Brutus or Cassius to commit suicide, since as Stoics they had already shown themselves weary of a full life.[5] And some of the neo-stoics were to take the old creed only too seriously, like poor Budgell, who left behind the famous message:

> What Cato did and Addison approved
> Cannot be wrong.

[1] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, p. 72. [2] *Ibid*, p. 51. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 47.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 56. [5] *Ibid.*, p. 59.

But Folly will have none of it: the remedy is more folly; for "now I think ye see what would become of the world if all men should be wise."

Keeping this aspect of Folly in our minds, we shall not be pained, as so many have been, by the conclusion of the work, where Folly appears as a Christian virtue. We must simply forget that Erasmus started with the conception of Folly as wickedness and sin, as opposition to the will of God; we must concentrate on her humanism, her touch with life which is the antithesis of all pedantry, and the laughing sincerity of the court fool. Then we can appreciate him when he writes:

> Christ ever abhors and condemns those wise men, and such as put confidence in their owne wisdome. And this Paul makes clearly when he said, 'God has chosen the foolish things of this world'. . . Such as are destin'd to eternal life are called sheep, than which creature there is not anything more foolish. . . . Christ himself . . . being the wisdome of the Father, yet in some manner became a fool, when, taking upon him the nature of man, he was found in shape as a man. . . . To speak briefly, all Christian Religion seems to have a kind of allyance with folly, and in no respect to accord with wisdome. . . . The first founders of it were plain, simple persons. . . . Lastly, there are no sort of fools seem more out of the way than are these whom the zeal of Christian religion has swallowed up, so that they . . . suffer themselves to be cheated, put no difference between friends and enemies.

There *is* an element of divine folly in pure Christianity, and also in the Christian Humanism of Erasmus. It is that which separates his teaching from the more calculating morality of the *Aufklärung*. For there is a recklessness at the heart of Christianity and of the Philosophy of Christ which not all the timidities of Erasmus' own personality could conceal.

T. S. K. Scott-Craig.

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[1] Erasmus, *op. cit.*, pp. 172 ff.

# MISCELLANEA

## OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Dr Reinhold Niebuhr is Professor at the Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and Editor of *Radical Religion.*

Dr Hermitage Day, who was Editor of the *Church Times* from 1915 to 1924, has resided in South Africa since 1927.

Dr E. R. Hardy, jun., is Fellow, Tutor and Instructor in Ecclesiastical History at the General Theological Seminary, New York City.

The Rev. Michael Bruce is Theological Colleges Secretary of the Student Christian Movement.

The Rev. E. L. Allen is Lecturer in Theology at King's College, Newcastle-on-Tyne; he is the author of *Kierkegaard : His Life and Thought.*

Mr Scott-Craig is Professor in the Department of English at Hobart College, U.S.A.

The Rev. Humphry Beevor is Chaplain of Shrewsbury School.

## NOTES

A steady stream of war-time pamphlets is now coming from the publishers. We would particularly recommend *The Message of the Bible in War-Time*, by Alan Richardson (S.C.M. Press, 9d.), which contains valuable materials for study groups; and *A War-Time Chaplaincy*, by R. L. Barnes, C.R. (Mowbray, 1s. 6d.), which provides wise and practical guidance for army chaplains. Fr Barnes writes out of his experience as a chaplain in the last war. He does not discuss whether a change in the status of chaplains is desirable, although he remarks that during a period when in a civilian capacity he was ministering to soldiers he " had a freedom of access to barrack-rooms and an ease in them which I never experienced when clothed in an officer's uniform."

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## ANGLICAN THEOLOGY

" ' Progress,' indeed, was the bottom layer of Victorian assumptions. . . . It still appears in the ' man in the street's ' confidence in times of adversity that, thanks to the general order of things, ' something is likely to turn up.' " " While [this generation] has been going bankrupt . . . The infection of a kind of cosmic nervousness has become widespread . . . The skies have darkened and men's minds have become more sombre." " The mind of society has become morbid with the sickness of

an industrial order." "There is a hiatus between the philosophy of necessary and successful self-assertion and the promise to the meek that they shall inherit the earth." "The Cross . . . matches the darkness of the world in whose panorama it appears." "The hour is come; already the armies are arrayed; the battle is begun. For all the world is in transformation."

What book contains these sentences? Surely they are typical utterances of contemporary crisis-theology, which contrasts so strongly with pre-1914 Liberalism! Alas for our neat divisions, they come from *Foundations*, published in 1912, and confirm Dr Selwyn's contention in the January number as against Mr Mascall's.

W. K. L. C.

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## ECCLESIASTICAL TRANSCENDENTALISM?

*To the Editor of* THEOLOGY.

SIR,

May I comment on Canon Quick's two letters in your November and January numbers? In the last sentence of his reply to Mr Mackinnon Canon Quick says he "cannot exclude teaching about the moral law (rights and duties) from the Church's function in this time of darkness." In spite of his brief explanation in his second letter I still find in this sentence echoes of that duality of function which perplexed me in his first letter. He there urged that the Church "can teach and uphold the moral law as well as its own gospel," and that it must lead men "not only in faith but also in morals." But surely a prophetic Church cannot proclaim its "characteristic gospel of repentance" without proclaiming the moral law, and without asserting that the ground of that law is one with the Author of redemption. For there are not two factors involved, but only one—the utterance and act of the living God who exhibits to men the true character of sin, and in so doing overcomes it.

I wonder if I am wrong in thinking that (to use Höffding's illustration) Canon Quick likens the Church to an ambulance and not to the pillar of fire. "I only meant to say that in a juster order of society the Church would have a better chance of leading men to true repentance." Must we wait while someone else builds? Or can we hold that it is through true repentance that a juster order of society is likely to be reached, and that the prelude to true repentance is the proclamation of the Word of God with its attendant humbling of pride? Possibly

I misunderstand Canon Quick at this point, because he thinks that a man " cannot take the gospel-view of sin until he has already believed the gospel." But can this implied disjunction between penitence and belief be maintained? And what concept can we form of " believing the gospel " which does not *all the time* include " the gospel-view of sin "?

With Canon Quick I would admit that I may be guilty of misunderstanding or misrepresentation, and with him also I recognize the urgency of this discussion. I hope, therefore, that he will forgive me if I state crudely the two alternatives as they appear to me. He would say that there is much right on our side in this war. Because this is undoubtedly true we must support the morale of the nation by distinctively moral teaching inculcating truth, justice and liberty, and by asserting rights and duties: and especially we must beware of the danger of feeling that " a just war is a contradiction in terms." Later on, when a juster order of society has arrived, the Church will have a " better chance " of confronting men with the demand and the promise springing out of the revelation of God in Christ it claims to possess. But, for the present, prophetic detachment is misplaced.

As against that there is another view, which bids us recognize that however " right " our cause may be, its rightness is as nothing compared with the sinfulness with which we and our enemies and our whole civilization are shot through. All have sinned, and our only hope lies in recognizing that we are all under the judgment expressed in the divine act. That recognition is the final and true " support of the nation's morale," for there we meet that which makes on us an absolute claim which does not deny the absolute authority of conscience. For if both the moral agent and his field of moral choice owe their continued existence to the creative utterance of God, the claim which arises out of that situation is at once absolute, and one which " requires allegiance to God's holy Word in Jesus Christ."

Yours, etc.,

H. C. L. Heywood.

Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge.

*January* 3, 1940.

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*To the Editor of* Theology.

Sir,

Mr Mackinnon deals in your December number with what he feels to be implied in the letter from Canon Quick that you published the month before. But it seems to me that before any of the latter's implications of this kind can be discussed,

the two very curious assertions which served as his premisses require to be called in question.

The first assertion was of a type more characteristic of the sensational press than of the Regius Chair of Divinity at Oxford. It was that " the most serious feature in the life of modern Europe is the collapse of all commonly acknowledged standards of morality." For this alleged happening he went on to blame " the advent of Communism and Nazism "; and your readers are entitled to ask if the statement is not at least an astounding exaggeration of the consequences of the actualization of those isms. For note that he spoke of " the life of modern Europe," not of life in parts of Europe, and that he used both the word " all " and the word " collapse." But of course it is much worse than an exaggeration; it is completely false. The social and private lives of the inhabitants of Germany and Russia continue to acknowledge the existence of the moral law even as they always have done, and whenever individual passion and concupiscence cause the law to be infringed among them the infringement is recognized to be a transgression exactly as it is elsewhere. No doubt there was in both countries a period of moral licence, but now that is all over. Their judicial laws uphold the two most important institutions of the social order—contract and the family; divorce, for example, is much more difficult to obtain in Russia than in England, and the punishment there for abortion and for the desertion of babies is particularly severe. Furthermore, whenever the German or the Russian Government has committed acts shocking to English opinion, such as " purges " or annexations of foreign territory, the Government concerned has been at pains to justify itself. What more eloquent testimony, not of the collapse, but of the strength of the moral law, there can be than these attempts at justification, it would be instructive to learn.

The second assertion was that it is by " the absolute authority of conscience " that, " however imperfectly, men everywhere apprehend God's moral law." This is curious, in the first place, because at the same time as it fails to distinguish between the individual and the collective conscience, it conveniently overlooks how conscience, both individual and collective, has through the ages varied rather more than " imperfectly " in its interpretation of " God's moral law " as applicable to particular instances. It is even more curious, in the second place, in that it contradicts the first assertion. If conscience enables men *everywhere* to apprehend the moral law, how can " *all* standards of morality " ever collapse ? Possibly Canon Quick, in his anxiety to endow Communism and Nazism with supernatural powers, wished to imply that since the advent of those isms conscience has mysteriously vanished from Germany and Russia. We may doubt that the implication rests on any psychological evidence.

I can well believe, sir, that your admirable editorial of October is open to being dissented from, but my point is that these two assertions together furnish very flimsy ground for criticizing the attitude it set forth.

MONTGOMERY BELGION.

THE ATHENÆUM, S.W. 1.
*December* 4, 1939.

## AMERICA AND THE WAR

*To the Editor of* THEOLOGY.

SIR,

The following statement occurs at the close of S. L. Bethell's acute and cordial review of my book *Humanism and Imagination* in your November issue: " Our author thinks that Europe may one day be Christianized from America. . . ." No, I do not think so, and cannot recall that I ever did. But if the reviewer can cite in point some early passage of mine which I have been unable so far to discover, I here and now retract it utterly. For an American critic to harbour such a hope would be presumptuous and fatuous, especially at the present time. Apparently a lust for peace-at-any-price, busily flattered by our politicians in view of next year's national election, has mastered a majority of our people. That lust is at once unchristian and imprudent. It is encouraging the Nazis and Bolsheviks, also perhaps the Italian and Japanese militarists, to pursue a war of world conquest. This would involve the United States, and our present lust for peace would quickly be transmuted into a nationalistic lust for battle. That situation could be forestalled if, without sending a single soldier abroad, we would at once enter the present struggle on the side of the Allies with our navy and our material resources. Such action would be prudent; also it might be tinged with Christian chivalry. This virtue, however, has been heavily overridden everywhere by the swift advance of secularity in education. Violently in Russia, gently in other lands including America, young people are being educated out of Christianity. Just now Americans of all sorts and creeds are rousing themselves to face that catastrophe; efforts are being made to reinstate religious teaching in our schools. Meanwhile dreadful damage has been done. In 1915 the sinking of the *Lusitania* gave rise in America to general righteous indignation; not so the sinking of the *Athenia* in 1939. For the new generation has been taught that all such " mental states," notably Christian chivalry, are entirely out of date. . . . Peace hath her evils no less than war. Indeed, a lust for material peace devoid of all divine Peace can be more damaging to Christianity than a thirst for brutal conquest, because it can masquerade as a Christian virtue or as a post-Christian value.

The only reliable hope is that one day America and Europe, and then Asia, will be Christianized, not from each other, but from the reuniting and remilitant Church of God.

Yours faithfully,

AMHERST, MASS. G. R. ELLIOTT.
*November* 20, 1939.

[For Mr. Bethell's reply see p. 159 below.]

## THE FUNCTION OF CATHEDRALS

*To the Editor of* THEOLOGY.

DEAR SIR,

I am indeed grateful to you for the attention which you have given my letter. I have read with great interest and, I hope, some profit the valuable contributions which you have secured—not least the very interesting review of the statutes of Truro Cathedral from Chancellor Mulliner; though Truro, not being an ancient cathedral, and being in consequence—as I suppose—less lavishly endowed, does not really come within the scope of my letter. May I, following Chancellor Mulliner's example, observe in passing that I had not thought it necessary to explain to the readers of THEOLOGY the sense in which I used the words " a really Christian country such as England was . . ." Nor do I now.

There is fairly general agreement among your contributors that the first and most important function of a cathedral is to " worship God in regular services of a high standard of music and reverence." I am glad of this. One of my own venerable employers—Dean Cranage reminds us of the sad and recent changes in our status—recently told me that he hoped the war would " bring some religion to the cathedral by abolishing the choir and making the services congregational." Dean Cranage makes the interesting point, which I have always wanted to develop, that the cathedrals are architecturally " functional "—nave for preaching, choir for offices, etc. At present the nave of most cathedrals is furnished to be a sort of second choir for use on special occasions to the detriment alike of architecture and function.

Your contributors are fairly generally agreed that the cathedrals should be " homes of learning." (I am afraid that I cannot understand what is meant by the phrase " place of vision." Most of our older cathedrals have their ghosts, but their appearances are too irregular to have much practical significance.) In theory we must all agree, but Canon Creed is alone in taking a more realistic view when he writes: " But in general a residentiary canon, in my judgment, should have some other duties as well as his cathedral duties." There's the rub ! And the question. Do those canons who are not appointed in

order to provide them with salaries for their diocesan work, in fact, provide the theological guidance which the Church has a right to expect from them?

A sentence in Canon FitzGerald's article raises what is to my mind a further question of some importance. He writes: "For that reason it is not desirable that the services of a cathedral should be of an extreme type in any direction." Obviously a cathedral of which the services are strikingly and exclusively Anglo-Catholic or Protestant is condemned in advance. But is the only alternative the "moderation," which is, in fact, far narrower in outlook than either of the extremes? Cannot a cathedral be *both* "high" and "low" at the same time? Why should either High Mass or a Gospel Service be ruled out in the interests of uniformity? In practice the Chapter would seem to encourage any additional ceremony provided that it bears as little resemblance as possible to any known catholic practice, and follows no liturgical principle. The smell of incense is "pleasant," and therefore let it be spilled from time to time on one of the stoves, or used in clouds at a nativity play; but to use it as the Church has always used it would be "disloyal to the central tradition of cathedral worship." I am quoting, sir, an actual instance within my experience. That brings me to my final point. No one of your contributors has demanded that the services of a cathedral should be in the hands of a liturgical expert. The only liturgical principle is "the Chapter rather thinks." Again I must say that I am quoting and not improvising. What the Chapter likes is "English," and therefore right. Liturgical principles and professional efficiency—at least, in matters of ceremonial—are unEnglish and therefore wrong. My experience is perhaps exceptional. I very much hope so. But the cathedral which I have the honour to serve and which, if I may again follow Chancellor Mulliner by introducing a personal note, I am privileged to love, has the reputation of being one of the most "live" cathedrals in the country. Is disendowment, with or without disestablishment, our only hope?

Yours, etc.,

CANONICUS MINIMUS.

*January* 9, 1940.

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*To the Editor of* THEOLOGY.

SIR,

One who has spent fifteen happy years as priest-vicar of a cathedral of the old foundation may perhaps be permitted to reply to "Canonicus Minimus'" letter.

Most cathedrals can be "run" by a dean and a couple of curates. The normal and special services can be provided for,

and if an honorary canon preaches most Sunday mornings the staff should be able to provide the remaining sermons, especially if a curate is willing to exchange with a near-by incumbent.

But if the cathedral is to be a " power station " for the diocese, as it should be, a larger staff is needed. A residentiary canonry should not be a kind of " recognition "—hateful word !—of successful parochial work in the diocese, but should normally be given to a specialist. If one canon is a theologian, another an educational expert, and one has great preaching and missionary gifts—was it not Bishop Lightfoot who began the " canon-missioner " plan by appointing Canon Body ?—the diocese will feel that it has at headquarters someone who can be called upon to do some bit of specialist work beyond the powers of the " general practitioner " or parish priest. Happy the diocese whose cathedral church is in the middle, and not, as here, seven miles from one boundary and seventy from the other ! But the motor-car simplifies transport and enables a man to reach remote parishes quickly and without fatigue. The difficulty is not to get suitable men for canonries, but, sometimes, to get the diocese to realize the existence of the special charismata at its disposal, and use them.

One point that should be stressed is that no cathedral has quite the same problems to solve as any other. The cathedrals of Bristol and Ely are far more nearly akin architecturally than the cities in which they are situated. If a canon of either were appointed dean of the other he would naturally expect to be in an utterly different environment and to have very differing opportunities of usefulness. On no institution are the methods of Procrustes less suitable, but in every case they should be regarded as power stations for the whole diocese. If " Canonicus Minimus " asks for a reply in one word to his question, " What are residentiary canonries for ?" I will give it him—specialists; and I would add that in giving them an income and scope the endowments of our ancient cathedrals are very well used. But there are other kinds of specialists besides in the narrower sense of the term, theological. Liddon was a theologian, but he was also a great preacher, and one may assume that Gladstone would not have sent him to Hereford or Ely. Pusey was Canon of Christ Church, appointed as a Hebraist, but it may be that his work as director of souls was more valuable than his Hebrew studies. " There are diversities of gifts," and the possession of any one in a marked degree may be held to render the possessor eligible for a post in which this gift may be most suitably placed at the disposal of the diocese and of the Church as a whole. There are also many " choirs and places where they sing " in a diocese, and the cathedral organist and minor canons have their contribution to make towards the edifying of the Body.

The same transport facilities that enable the specialists to

move easily about the diocese bring many parties every summer to see the cathedrals. Here " a great door and effectual " is open to the cathedral clergy. There are some virgers who can do this work excellently, but not all, and the party, especially if they are members of a parish in the diocese, much appreciate being " shown round " by one of the cathedral staff. When times are normal again " Canonicus Minimus " will spend many happy hours at this work, and will receive letters of gratitude that will make him feel very unworthy.

How far other work, such as that of an archdeacon or a suffragan bishop, should be combined with that of a residentiary canon is a question that admits of no brief reply. " Circumstances alter cases." Someone remarked that " the best work has been done by those who have with difficulty found time for it in the midst of crowded lives," but this is rather sweeping. Archdeacons there must be: unless they have large private means they must be paid. Which is better, to pay them with the revenues of a well-endowed parish from which they must often be absent, or with an endowed stall in the cathedral ?

Yours, etc.,
R. S. T. Haslehurst.

4, Vicar's Close,
Chichester.
*January* 5, 1940.

## COMMENT ON LITERARY PERIODICALS

All the periodicals usually under review in these quarterly comments have so far survived the conscription of thought, and still continue their (sometimes rather self-conscious) task of conserving ultimates. *Blackfriars*[1] does not say much about the war now, and the November number is notable for a generous appreciation of Kierkegaard by Victor White, O.P. *Christendom*[2] in its December issue even extends its scope beyond socio-theological articles (among which is an interesting study of the relations between ascetic theology and sociology by E. L. Mascall, and a piece of salutary but apocalyptically pessimistic disturbance by Ian Crombie, " Should the Christian stand out ?") to include four poems, one by a contributor to Theology, Mr S. L. Bethell, and a Note by another poet, Walter Roberts, " On Poetry in Wartime," who hopefully concludes that " we may live to see the renewal of faith in and through poetry, the return of the poet as a figure deserving of respect, and the renaissance of the arts as unconscious receptacles of the divine spirit." The Left-Wingers would like to think the same, and have bravely launched

[1] *Blackfriars*, pub. Blackwell, Oxford. 1s. monthly. [2] *Christendom*, pub. Blackwell, Oxford. 2s. quarterly.

a new monthly, *Horizon*,[1] to prove it. The first (December) number is a medley: H. E. Bates contributes a good short story, Herbert Read writes quite sensitively "let the war go on," J. B. Priestley begins to suspect that perhaps "all this fuss about machinery does some damage to the imagination," and Stephen Spender pours H. G. Wells, Gerald Heard, Aldous Huxley and T. S. Eliot (in descending order of importance) down the drain. After this despondent sarcasm it is a relief to read W. H. Auden's poem "Crisis" in the same number, which lifts an edge of hope:

> For the barren must wish to bear though the Spring
> Perish. . . .
> Our cities predict
> More than we hope; even our armies
> Have to express our need of forgiveness.

On the other political wing is a slight but most intelligent quarterly, *The Townsman*.[2] Last August it had an analysis of the healthy understanding of words in the oratorical style of Hitler, Mussolini and Machiavelli. Since the war it has given up hope of useful political comment ("I do not comment because my pigs do not read Propertius"), and the November number contains a racy piece of scurrility, "Pimp, Skunk and Profiteer," and in curious juxtaposition with it the first part of "Ora Pro Nobis," a "Miracle Play within the Order of the Mass," by Ronald Duncan, which displays a most Christian feeling. Ezra Pound, too, in spite of a rumbustious hostility to the Church ("Christianity is verminous with Semitic infections"), pleads for a nature religion in which the Incarnation would have more meaning than he would be willing to admit.

Discussion of this sort now usually revolves round T. S. Eliot's *Idea of a Christian Society*. D. W. Harding, reviewing this dubiously in the December *Scrutiny*,[3] "declines to forget Galileo," and prefers exploration (where the goal is unknown) to pilgrimage (where the destination is predetermined). The rest of the number maintains the usual high standard, with a rather inconclusive symposium review (generally critical) of the Spens Report, an excellent study of Webster's "White Devil," by James Smith, and continuations of "The American Cultural Scene," by H. B. Parkes, and "Literary Criticism in France," by M. Turnell (the section on Baudelaire is of most interest to our readers). Another interesting article, on "Escapism in Literature," by Olaf Stapledon, overlaps one in the December *Adelphi*[4] on "Philosophy and Literature," by Robert Hamilton,

[1] *Horizon*, pub. at 6, Selwyn House, Lansdowne Terrace, W.C. 1. 1s. monthly. [2] *Townsman*, pub. at 40, Great Russell Street, W.C. 1. 1s. quarterly. [3] *Scrutiny*, pub. Deighton, Bell and Co., Trinity Street, Cambridge. 2s. 6d. quarterly. [4] *The Adelphi*, pub. at 12, Woodside, Erskine Hill, N.W. 11. 1s. monthly.

who curiously suggests that the best synthesis between philosophy and literature is found in the essay form. (Surely the best, though admittedly rarest, is in the poem.) But apart from occasional hints dropped by Middleton Murry the *Adelphi* does not seem much aware of the deeper issues discussed in Mr Eliot's book. To those who have read the book a review by Maurice Reckitt in the *New English Weekly*[1] (December 7), and the reply by Mr Eliot the following week, will afford invaluable elucidation. Mr Reckitt wondered whether Mr Eliot was not pleading for a sub-Christian Society; Mr Eliot replies: " If you design your Christian Society only according to what your experience of human beings . . . tells you is possible, then it must remain open to the charge of being sub-Christian. If you design it beyond experience and history, you are committed to utopian plans, the unpracticability of which will expose you to relapse into a Lutheran despair of the world. . . . I did not attempt to sketch anything but a human society—that is to say, a society which, whatever spiritual heights it reaches, is liable always to fall out of the hand of God."

W. R. Jarrett-Kerr.

## ART EXHIBITION

Loan Exhibition, City Literary Institute, W.C. 2.

In the November issue we complained of the gulf that exists between the knowledge of painting and general education. This month we can note a highly successful effort by the British Institute of Adult Education to bridge the gulf. This is the exhibition of " Art for the people " which, as the catalogue says, is " a collection of paintings roughly representing a characteristic selection of contemporary picture making, made deliberately but not aggressively educative."

We have seldom derived so much enjoyment from an exhibition. Some of the paintings are easy to understand, some are difficult. Some are our old favourites which we have noted at other exhibitions (like Peploe's " Aspidistra " and Lowry's work, that have been previously mentioned in this magazine), and some are quite new and undiscovered. We strongly recommend readers to visit these exhibitions, which are held not only in London, but also in the provinces.

Perhaps the majority of the pictures shown are painters' paintings—that is, those in which all the artists' efforts are concentrated in the texture and colour and design of the picture. These things are the essence of painting, and without them

[1] *The New English Weekly*, 7, Rolls Passage, Chancery Lane, E.C. 4 6d. weekly.

it ceases to be art (Mark Gertler's " Still Life " is a perfect example).

Many of the artists seek in addition to comment on scenes of contemporary life. William Robert's " Café Scene " is an excellent example. Although his hard and calculating style belongs to what in America has degenerated into the ugly " stiff-pants school," yet the general atmosphere of gossip and drinks, the delicate way men handle a glass full of beer, and many other subtle feelings, are all perfectly expressed. Perhaps most truly representative of our age are the " Camden Town " group and their successors. Thus Conder painted a dull day on the front at Brighton, and Edith Sands paints a drab and faded " Spare Room," while Spencer Gore was interested in a dreary railed London square. With these may be included Bouisset, who, in " La Réunion Électorale," depicts a poor black-coated man holding forth about future glory to the contents of a back-street pub. Does this peace-time sorrow and tragedy, that godless boredom (epitomized in Sickert's " Ennui," hitherto in the Tate Gallery), provide the real clues as to why the fever of war grips society so readily ?

Very few of the artists try consciously to probe into deeper issues. Stanley Spencer does, but unlike the above artists he does not seem to belong to our time. Not only is he quite unique among modern artists, but also the religious feeling that he expresses has little to do with the rather intellectual version of Christianity which is nowadays developing. His painting called " Village Lovers," in which boys and girls stand about at the foot of a cross, the village cross, is a typical example of his work, and is the most arresting picture in the exhibition.

In so far as the exhibition is a truly characteristic selection of contemporary painting it does illustrate the haphazard nature of modern art. If, as Eric Newton points out in the literature sold at the exhibition, art is a means of communication, then each picture is certainly a more or less penetrating comment; but it is also evident that *collectively* modern art has nothing definite to say. Contemporary picture-making is like good-natured gossip, and is not in any way like the sustained discourse that the Christian art of former centuries delivers.

G. N. Walton.

# SURVEYS

## BOOKS ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

*The Necessity of Christian Modernism.* By T. Wigley. (James Clarke, 5s.)

*The Church and the Christian.* By Shailer Mathews. (Macmillan, 8s. 6d.)

*Essential Christianity.* By S. Angus. (John Murray, 6s.)

*The Framework of the Faith.* By Leslie Simmonds. (Longmans, 8s. 6d.)

*The Approach to Christianity.* By W. N. Pittenger. (Centenary Press, 3s. 6d.)

*Religion for Living.* By Bernard Iddings Bell. (Religious Book Club, 2s. 6d.)

It is a commonplace that all theology must be considered in the light of the historical events which form the background to the theologian's work. At this particular moment in history it is less than ever possible to ignore that background, or to estimate the value of the books before us without reference to the fact that the world is at war. It is true, of course, that all of these books must have been prepared for publication at least some months before last August; and it is possible that in some cases their authors had accomplished the bulk of their work before the events of September, 1938, made it clear to the general public that the international situation was becoming increasingly dangerous. Yet no theological work can be faithful to the tradition of Holy Scripture, and above all to the teaching method of Christ Himself, unless it presents its gospel in a form which is relevant to the needs and questionings of the ordinary thinking man of its day; and it is a fact of experience that those theological writings which can most clearly be seen to have been evoked by the peculiar circumstances of their historical period have been of the greatest permanent value to Christian thought.

The remarkable feature of these books is their failure to convey the sense of crisis which for the last two years at least has been the note of all secular literature from philosophical writings down to works of fiction. This is the more strange in view of the fact that it becomes increasingly clear that the present crisis of civilization is primarily concerned, not with democracy or liberty or the rights of smaller nationalities, but with Christianity itself—with whether the whole system of ethical life, the ideals of objective justice and humanity which conserve certain inalienable rights to the individual and which can be limited by no consideration of race, nation, or class, is to be maintained or annihilated. Such a system, bearing the imprint of pagan as well as Jewish antiquity, but implanted by the Christian Church on the hetero-

geneous mass of barbarian races which succeeded to the power of fallen Rome, was till recent decades hardly called in question even by those thinkers whose philosophy was furthest removed from that of historical Christian dogma. It is now challenged by new values of life, new codes of conduct which reject root and branch the ethical as well as the doctrinal teaching of the Christian gospel. The failure of these books to hint at any awareness on the part of their authors that this situation exists points to a failure general in Christian thought to-day, which in spite of notable exceptions to the rule is becoming increasingly clear to a critical world. At a time when the fundamental truths of the Faith are called in question Christian thinkers appear to be occupied with the byways of theology, and fail to proclaim to a bewildered world that the Christian gospel provides at once a sufficient answer to, and an effective weapon against, the new forms of paganism which threaten to overrun European civilization.

From a book entitled *The Necessity of Christian Modernism* one might expect to find some reference to the existence of ideologies which stand to-day in frank opposition to Christianity; and this expectation is the more justifiable in view of the fact that this book is an expansion of lectures delivered in the winter of 1938-39. Yet the standpoint of the author's thought belongs to a period which is already past. It is effectively epitomized by the following quotation: " What are the influences which differentiate our age from any previous age ? . . . In the main they are two. There are the results of Biblical scholarship which are available in many books for all who can read, and there is the amazing development of the sciences which in recent days has literally revolutionized our understanding of the world and of ourselves." Only a very generous extension of the term can describe this outlook as distinctively " modern." The results of Biblical scholarship are taken into account by theologians of every shade of opinion outside the Roman Catholic Church; the development of the sciences by all theologians without exception. There may still be need for constant repetition of the fact that the doctrines of Christianity are compatible with the acceptance of a theory of evolution, or that our beliefs are not dependent on " the credibility of Judges or the edibility of Jonah "; but these are not the lines along which an apologetic for Christianity must be laid in the circumstances of to-day. The struggle is now concerned with the question, not of the restatement of dogma, but of the relevance of Christianity to the social and political problems and needs of to-day—a relevance emphatically denied by those who act most drastically in the face of such problems and are at present unchecked in their revolutionary successes. A few scattered references to the political systems of totalitarian states show that the author is aware of their existence and recognizes that they may have some influence on the life and thought of the individual. But there is no suggestion that

he has appreciated the fact that, at least in Germany and Russia, these political systems carry with them a completely novel philosophy of life which the individual citizen is under obligation to accept and which the State is at pains to inculcate through every means at its disposal. No " restatement of Christianity " which has failed seriously to study these new philosophies, or to appreciate the reasons for their successful dissemination in the world to-day, or to show clearly along what lines the Christian counter-attack must be made, can lay claim to the title " modern." The failure of the school of English Modernism which Mr Wigley represents lies in the fact that it is still so obsessed with the Darwinian revolution that it has failed to notice the Marxian revolution; it is so occupied in kicking the corpse of Victorian obscurantism that it has failed to perceive the vigorous enemy which is assaulting Christianity in the shape of the Nazi-Fascist " revolt from reason."

In view of the author's standpoint, it is perhaps not surprising to find that his last chapter—on " Modernism, positive and practical "—contains no positive or practical suggestions on the social reconstruction which must inevitably form a large part of any program for a modern Christian revival, and that the necessity for the reconsideration of modern ethical criteria in the economic and political fields has escaped him. Once again, this chapter illustrates only too obviously the limitations of this form of modernism. Its gospel is a gospel for those who are living in a state of " security," whose only problems are problems for the intellect, to whom educational and economic advantages have given leisure and opportunity to consider these problems in isolation and out of relation to the practical needs of the society in which they live. Mr Wigley makes a strong plea for the " restatement of dogma "; and if by this (the only plank of his " positive and practical " program) he meant merely the simplification of theological phraseology and the clarification of credal and other authoritative statements which are constantly misunderstood by the uninstructed public, we should heartily agree with him. Nor should we wish to question his thesis that the truth is not best defended by attempts to short-circuit rational argument whether by anathema or by punitive force. What we should wish to deny is the implication of his argument that the truths of orthodoxy are not and cannot be defended in the light of reason—an assumption grossly at variance with fact. In the last resort the maintenance of orthodox Christian beliefs has always depended on the use of rational argument rather than on the use of excommunication; while it must be admitted that on many occasions in history ecclesiastical authority has abused its powers, history shows that it has not been by such methods (which ultimately defeat their own object), but by the use of the weapon of reason, that the abiding faith of historical Christendom has been safeguarded.

But it becomes clear that the appeal for a " reconstruction of dogma " is, in fact, an appeal for its abolition. " What the modernist claims is that liberty of opinion should be absolute." This is, in effect, a denial that the Christian Church has any teaching function whatever, that there is any specific gospel which it is her duty to present to mankind, any rational conclusions in the realm of theology which it is her duty to safeguard. In fact, ultimately there is no room in Mr Wigley's theology for a Church at all; for him religion is the affair of the individual, not the affair of a community which has a message as well for the uneducated as for the educated, which shows men the path of salvation and does not merely remind them of the duty of using their brains.

Dr Shailer Mathews sees that the community must have a place in any positive presentation of the Christian religion; but it is " churches " rather than " the Church " which he envisages. There are many yearning glances in the course of his book at the Catholic conception of the Church; but ultimately his idea of the Christian community consists in a series of local communities, ideally, perhaps loosely, federated, but not held together by any common system of belief or conduct. This is, of course, the peculiar doctrine of Congregationalism, and one which has always tended to flourish in an atmosphere of security. This probably explains its popularity in the continent of America, which has not yet felt the full force of the present world crisis; it is certain that there this doctrine of the Church has a vogue which goes far beyond the limits of the Congregational bodies.

Yet a federation of churches, bound only by ties of vague mutual amiability, neither represents the conception of the Church which is to be found in the New Testament, nor forms a driving force which is capable of redirecting the attention of mankind to the Christian gospel. Dr Mathews expressly rules out the maintenance of a common doctrine as a basis for the unity even apparently of a single local " church "; his idea is that the church should provide a common centre for ethical, social and charitable endeavour. But it becomes increasingly clear that the differences of opinion between groups of Christians are not confined to matters of metaphysics or history, but extend to matters of ethical principle; and these last differences inevitably lead to wide divergences as to the substance of Christian social doctrine. For all their concentration on the study of social reform, the practical proposals which have emanated from Protestant bodies, whether in England or America, are vague and unpractical compared with recent encyclicals of the Roman Catholic Church. Where doctrine is regarded as matter of uncertainty or unimportance, a similar vagueness and a certain shallowness is seen to characterize a community's attitude towards the solution of the problems of the day. As in the

political sphere coalitions and "united fronts" do not prove themselves the strongest form of government, so in the religious sphere strong action can be initiated only by those who are firmly agreed on first principles.

The same failure to visualize the Christian religion as the religion of a community and to perceive that Christian unity can be achieved only through an agreement on the essential nature of the Christian gospel is to be found in Professor Angus's *Essential Christianity*. Here the author makes considerable capital out of past dogmatic controversies, and out of the consequent spirit of intolerance which so often infected the orthodox (and, we would add, also the unorthodox) party of the day. He points out, rightly enough, that in the history of the Church dogma has often been allowed to usurp the place of faith; but the lines along which he wishes to see the Christian creeds revised show that he himself wishes to see faith usurp the place of dogma. Such expressions as the Johannine formulæ, "God is light," and "God is love," would take the place of the definitions of the Apostles' or Nicene Creed; and such formulæ would prove themselves acceptable to all types of Christian from the Romanist to the Quaker.

But this is to make creeds fulfil a purpose for which they were never intended. The aim of the creeds is not to express "faith" in the sense in which Professor Angus uses the term in his book—namely, to denote the personal religious experience of the individual. Expressions of that "faith" which is shared by all who partake in the Christian experience undoubtedly have their place; they are to be found throughout the pages of the New Testament, and are frequently voiced in the devotional phrases of the historic liturgies. But the purpose of creeds is different. Creeds are intended to express the objective truths, metaphysical or historical, to which that personal experience bears witness. They are not the outcome of that experience, but the statement of those findings of the intellect on which the believer bases his conviction that his experience is valid. Because the Christian religion claims to be not merely a subjective psychological experience, but to have its basis in objective fact, the language of the creeds can never be confused with the language of devotion. And it is because of this objectivity of Christianity that creeds are necessary.

The Church's failure to-day is not due to an attempt remorselessly to force dogma on a recalcitrant world. It becomes increasingly clear that men to-day desire a dogma (or if the term be preferred an ideology) which will give them guidance in the ordering both of their personal lives and of the manifold relationships with their fellow-men, social, political, economical, in which they are involved. Where organized Christianity is failing is in the fact that it does not present its dogma as an "ideology," as something which is relevant to the needs of

mankind to-day, and not merely as a hoary intellectual system which it has inherited from the past. It is untrue to suggest, as is often done, that the modern desire for the guidance which such an ideology can provide is a sign of mental degeneracy, of a revolt from the use of reason and a refusal to think. It is true that the ideology imposed on German citizens is largely anti-rational; but the Marxian ideology which has an equally drastic effect on the thought and lives of citizens of the U.S.S.R. cannot be condemned as irrational, however much the Christian may disagree with it. What, therefore, the Christian needs to attempt is a presentation of Christian dogma and of the Christian systems of worship and ethics which will appeal to a world at an age of crisis. In the present writer's opinion, such a presentation may well involve the revision of the terminology (though not of the essential content) of historical doctrinal formulæ. It must certainly involve the exposition of the social and ethical implications of the Christian faith in a far clearer and more definite manner than has yet been done by theologians outside the Roman Catholic Church, and the demand (not yet even in that communion effectively imposed) that such implications are to be taken seriously by Christian citizens.

There is space here only briefly to mention two books in which the attempt is made to commend the faith of historic Christianity to the thinking man. Fr Leslie Simmonds in *The Framework of Faith* gives a careful summary of the grounds of belief, though it must be admitted that this book suffers, like those we have already mentioned, from an atmosphere of detachment from the world of to-day. A shorter and slighter book is Fr Pittenger's *The Approach to Christianity*; but it is a really good survey of Christian doctrine for the educated but not theologically-minded reader. The author is concerned to emphasize the practical implications of the beliefs which he advocates, but he is somewhat vague and indefinite in his conclusions. By far the best positive apologetic for the Faith is to be found in Dr Iddings Bell's *Religion for Living*. Dr Bell, alone of the authors whom we have mentioned, is aware of the kind of mentality to which Christian apologetic most needs to be addressed to-day; and he has coined the word " Postmodernist " to express it. He has done his work admirably; and it is impossible to censure this book on the ground that it ignores the relevance of religion to modern problems, or that the author is blind to the needs of the world to which he offers the gospel of Christ. Until Christian apologists realize the existence of the " Postmodernist " and address their apologetic to him, both Catholic and Modernist theology will fail in its appeal to the world of to-day. The Anglican communion stands in sore need of the realism which characterizes the writing of Dr Bell.

Humphry Beevor.

# BOOK REVIEWS

THE ORIGINS OF PRIVATE PENANCE IN THE WESTERN CHURCH. By R. C. Mortimer. O.U.P. 10s. 6d.

The Oxford Lecturer in Early Canon Law is the first English scholar to intervene in a discussion which has been proceeding on the Continent for more than ten years on the history of the administration of Penance. In the pre-Nicene Church and for some centuries afterwards Penance, *exhomologesis*, was a prolonged period of suspension from Communion accompanied by severe mortifications, was publicly known to the Church, as was the absolution which ended it, might only be undergone once by the layman and not at all by the clergy, and involved onerous lifelong consequences for the restored penitent. It has been sufficiently established, by Poschman and others, that those features of later Western practice which contrast most strikingly with early notions on Penance—its privacy, iterability, comparative mildness and the absence of lifelong disabilities—first appear fully developed in essentials in the Churches influenced by Celtic and Anglo-Saxon monachism. But the question has arisen how far these innovations are really insular novelties, and how far their real origins may be traced to long-standing modifications or even permanent bye-forms of the old normal public *exhomologesis* in the Mediterranean Churches themselves. Galtier (*L'Eglise et la rémission des péchés*, Paris, 1932) claimed to have found evidence in patristic authors from the second century onwards for the existence of a system of " private penance " for sins less grave or not notorious, involving confession to a priest, penance, and an *absolution* (not merely spiritual direction), which might be undergone more than once. (The crux of the question lies in the existence of any form of *absolution* for sin apart from the normal *exhomologesis*).

Mr Mortimer submits the alleged evidence for this " private penance " in the Western Fathers from Tertullian to St Gregory I to an examination—which is excellently done, thorough, lucid and fair—the result of which must be to confirm the doubts which many students must have felt abont Galtier's thesis. His conclusion that the Church knew no other form of ecclesiastical absolution from sin except that which closed the *exhomologesis*—and that even this was not originally bestowed on all sins (murder, adultery and apostasy being originally accounted " irremissible " by the Church, though the penitent was led to hope for Divine pardon after death)—will have to be accepted. The evidence is really rather stronger than Mr Mortimer brings out; *e.g.* Irenæus, *Adv. Hær.* I. vii. 4 and 6, appears to illustrate in actual practice among Catholics in second-century Gaul that very discipline which Mr Mortimer, against Galtier, infers (pp. 14-18) from Tertullian *De Pudicitia* existed in Africa in the early third

century among Catholics as well as Montanists. But it is likely that second-century practice had varied on the discipline concerning adultery (*cf.* Denys of Corinth *ap.* Eusebius *E.H.* iv. 23. 6). Justin the Catholic rates bigamy as adultery (I. *Ap.* 15), which suggests that the later Montanists retained the ancient discipline in some points which Catholicism had abandoned before Tertullian's day, though Justin may in this represent the Church of Asia where he was converted, rather than of Rome where he wrote. Indeed, the unrestricted nature of the episcopal power to absolve—ἐξουσίαν ἀφιέναι ἁμαρτίας κατὰ τὴν ἐντολήν σου—in Hippolytus, *Apostolic Tradition*, iii. 5, rather suggests that the question of " irremissible " sins was hardly raised at Rome before the pontificate of St Callistus.

These are details, but the virtual ignoring of the second century which is implied by their omission has a consequence in the ignoring of the whole question of origins. Had *exhomologesis* a canonical (*i.e.*, disciplinary) or a directly sacramental origin? Was the absolution which terminated it originally regarded primarily as a release from excommunication or as a remission of sin? An ordinance which in the nature of the case could only be imposed by the Church for sin which was notorious rather than grave in itself does not look like a pastoral so much as a disciplinary device. Doubtless in the crowded life of the Roman tenements or the glaring publicity of an African compound some kinds of grave sin would quickly become notorious in any case. But it was not to sin so much as to scandal that *exhomologesis* did in fact address itself. An origin as a safeguard to the Church rather than a medicine for the individual would go some way to explain certain features of the early history, and also the somewhat sudden appearance of the whole system as a working and fully developed institution. (Has it any connexion with the institution of the three-year catechumenate, which appears at about the same time?) It is certainly strange that the Church retained for so long unmodified in all essentials an institution which—from the standpoint of pastoral care and the spiritual progress of souls—seems so exactly designed by its rigidity to defeat its own object.

The other weakness of the book is the lack of a final chapter linking it up with the work of scholars like Poschman on the Celtic and Anglo-Saxon modifications of the ancient system. The actual " Origins of Private Penance in the Western Church " are really left without explanation by Mr Mortimer, who is concerned only to show where they do not lie. What he has done is to demonstrate conclusively against Galtier that down to the time of St Gregory the Great the old *exhomologesis*, unmodified in all essentials, remained the sole form of absolution from mortal sin known to the Western Church.

Gregory Dix, O.S.B.

From Morality to Religion. By W. G. De Burgh. Macdonald and Evans. 12s. 6d.

Mr De Burgh's latest volume is a valuable discussion of some aspects of the relations between morality and religion, and is to be included in the growing number of Gifford Lectures which may be studied with profit by others as well as by advanced students of philosophy. It is not that the latter may ignore this book; indeed, those whose reading in ethics has been slight will find that effort is required to appreciate parts of these lectures, though the exposition is lucid and should be quite intelligible to any careful reader.

The author's starting-point is a theme which he regards as of great importance, strangely neglected: the distinction that human actions may be judged as they are done from a sense of duty or as they are done from desire of good. He carefully analyses the implications of both types of action, regarding, with Kant, the former as alone as strictly moral action but differing from him in refusing to deny value to actions done from the desire of good; they have intrinsic though not moral value. Mr De Burgh also considers the relation of the two types of action in experience. He holds that the distinction between them is a real difference. The concept of good is not grounded in the sense of obligation, whereas moral goodness is so grounded. Desire stirred by the apprehension of good is spontaneous, not commanded. Mr De Burgh's position is that this dualism is, for ethics, ultimate.

The contention of this book is that reflection upon morality points beyond it to religion, which alone can satisfy the claims of morality and answer questions which ethics raises but cannot solve. The argument is that the (ethically ultimate) dualism of duty and goodness can be reconciled by a form of theism in which God is conceived as love. The reasoning is necessarily confined within the limits of the Gifford trust, and references to Christian doctrine are illustrative rather than apologetic, but they are nevertheless illuminating and cogently presented with evident sympathy. There is a lecture on the moral argument to theism in which the author meets objections brought against the reasoning that recognition of a moral order is a valid ground for theistic inference, and he also examines the objections against attributing "goodness" to God. It is maintained that it is in the goodness of God that all forms of goodness find their principle of unification, and that the problem of the unity of all values is thus answered.

Religion gives its sanction to morality, but in doing so transforms it. The transformation is effected by consciousness of personal relationship to God. There is, as St Thomas Aquinas taught, "infused" as well as "acquired" virtue. "Grace perfects nature." Supernatural agency illumines the whole

life by the infusion of Divine love. "Religious conduct, as exemplified in lives inspired by the ideal of Christianity, is characterized by a new and distinctive form, the love of man for God. . . . No one who is blind to this difference of essential principle is qualified to pass a judgment on the relationship between religion and morality" (p. 243). An examination of the motive of love towards God suggests what Mr De Burgh calls a new variant of the ontological argument, in that if such love is a genuine experience it implies the Divine existence (not only the thought of it) as immanent in the experiencing subject. The last of the eight lectures treats the question of the reaction of religion upon secular morality. It is shown that the concepts of personality and humanity are reduced to empty forms if they are denuded of all they owe to religion. There is also a very pertinent section upon the question of how the superiority of Christian religious life over secular morality can be maintained in view of the admitted scandals of Christian history.

To the lectures as delivered Mr De Burgh has added a chapter in which he illustrates and deplores the modern flight from reason. He is convinced that there will be no very useful or convincing philosophy until we return from that flight; but the return must be to an extended, a truer and more fruitful conception of the nature and scope of reason and rational knowledge than has prevailed since Descartes, and such as will take full account of religious as of other forms of experience. In these concluding pages, as from time to time throughout the book, the author shows the connexions of his themes with practical life and certain of the conditions in the modern world. The teaching priest who will study this work will be fully rewarded.

J. S. Bezzant.

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The Priest as Student. By Various Writers. Edited by H. S. Box. S.P.C.K. 8s. 6d.

A scholarly and cultured ministry has long been one of the aims and even (may we say ?) adornments of the *Ecclesia Anglicana*. To-day there is an obvious danger that this ideal may be sacrificed to organizational "efficiency." Hence the idea underlying this volume is important and a re-emphasizing of it is timely—war or no war ! In an introductory chapter on "The Importance of Study," Fr Thomas Hannay, C.R., admirably marshals the many cogent reasons why the clergy should study and why "a priest, in acquiring knowledge, should aim at becoming more or less of an expert in some subject." He is not unaware of the many difficulties which the busy priest encounters in the performance of this important duty, though he may be judged somewhat too optimistic when he says that the priest "can afford to buy the books, or a good library is at hand." In a light contribution on "The Study of Literature," which forms

the closing essay, the Rev. Marcus Donovan reminds us that one is never too old to learn: " It would be a wise plan for the middle-aged and the elderly to resolve to break new ground in their reading."

Canon S. L. Brown writes a competent essay on " The Study of the Old Testament," and the Rev. L. J. Collins writes on " The Study of the New Testament." The latter makes some attempt to point out what seem to him to be the main problems which call for study, but it is just possible that quite a number of parish priests would have to start a little farther back than Mr Collins's advance position. Dr W. J. Sparrow Simpson's chapter on " The Study of the Fathers " might well persuade many a priest to embark upon this fascinating subject—provided, of course, that he had access to the many volumes of their translated writings (*The Library of the Fathers*, forty-eight volumes; *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, twenty-four volumes, etc. !) To Fr Trevor Jalland's chapter on " The Study of Dogmatic Theology " the editor appends " a scheme of reading " which consists of more than a hundred items !

The editor's own chapter on " The Study of Moral Theology " reveals what many will consider to be the fatal defect of the book—its one-sidedness. If the student desires to learn what more than one school of thought is saying to-day in the sphere of moral theology, he will receive no help here. The existence of such thinkers as Brunner, Niebuhr or Grisebach is not acknowledged. A pre-Reformation standpoint of salvation by works is affirmed; practical theology teaches us what we must *do* to attain salvation: " Moral theology gives us the fundamental rules by which men's actions must be directed and governed if they would attain to God . . . and deals with the application of these rules. . . ."

The Rev. Patrick Thompson's chapter on " Spiritual Theology " concludes with a bibliography in the form of " a five-year plan of graduated spare-time reading for a spiritual book-a-month club." There is an essay on " The Study of Canon Law " by the Rev. G. W. O. Addleshaw. The Rev. Charles Smyth contributes a chapter on " The Study of Church History," which develops into a rollicking account of the history of the English Church; it ends with a " Select Bibliography " which the parish priest might be pardoned for thinking to be an attempt to enumerate all the Church history books which have ever been written (" Note—The numerals in brackets indicate the number of volumes "). The Rev. H. de Candole's wise and practical essay on " The Study of Liturgiology " deserves nothing but praise, and its unpretentious bibliography will be found genuinely helpful. Dr F. L. Cross writes a very interesting but technical chapter on " The Study of Philosophy," which competently surveys the field of modern philosophical discussion. The Rev. V. A. Demant appropriately contributes

a valuable essay on "The Study of Sociology"—appropriately, because Fr Demant is himself a busy parish priest who has become an expert in this whole subject. His exhortation is therefore practical, his advice acceptable and his instruction profitable; the useful chapter which he has written will be found helpful by any priest who wishes to explore this complicated subject. His bibliography is many-sided and practical.

There are misprints on pages 79 and 334.

ALAN RICHARDSON.

PERSONALITIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By Fleming James. Charles Scribner's Sons. 12s. 6d.

The view of Carlyle and his school that history can only properly be understood through reading the lives of the great men and women of succeeding ages has found much favour in recent years. Professor Fleming James has followed this line in his approach to the Old Testament.

Since the beginning of the present century there has been a lessening of interest in the Old Testament. It has come to be assumed that Higher Criticism and Archæology have in some way discredited the Book, that the Old Testament heroes are more primitive than they were once thought to be, and that therefore the literary, historical, and religious value of the Old Testament is diminished for us. The truth is very different. By our frank discrimination between the different levels of morality reflected in its pages we are enabled to appreciate more fully, not less fully, this wonderful chapter in the story of man's search for God.

All this, and more, is the aim of Professor James in *Personalities of the Old Testament.* The material incorporated in these Hale Lectures, he tells us, has been tested through eleven years of teaching in the Berkeley Divinity School and the Yale University Divinity School. Professor Julius Bewer, in an appreciative foreword, stresses the need for recovering the spiritual message of the Old Testament in an age when specialized study, whether critical or historical, tends to shade its light. This the author has attempted to do in a series of short biographies which cover the period of the Old Testament.

Among the personalities dealt with in this book are Moses, Joshua, Gideon, Samuel, the Yahwist, the Priestly Writers, the Wise Men of the Book of Proverbs, and the writer of Daniel. One could wish that Professor James had seen fit to include the personality of Ruth—surely no less fascinating than Deborah, whose character is sketched in six masterly pages. Again, Jonah is as much a personality of the Old Testament as Job, though the writers of both the books which bear these names are unknown.

There is perhaps an overstatement on p. 30, where the author, speaking of the Covenant at Sinai, remarks that Israel was

always conscious that Yahweh had taken the nation to Himself by free choice. But in most places the book has a tendency towards over-caution. Professor James entirely rejects the widely accepted view that there was some connexion between the God of Moses and the God of the Midianites or the Kenites (pp. 10-11). He dismisses the various attempts of scholars to account for the crossing of the Red Sea in terms of natural phenomena, but it is not clear what he means by saying that "it is better to adhere to the actual tradition" (p. 21, n. 3). Did Moses literally stretch forth his rod over the sea and divide it (Exod. xiv, 16)?

In his selection of the original parts of Job Professor James follows Barton (p. 515). But there are many verses besides chaps. xxviii, xxxii-xxxvii, xl 15 to xli 34 which are acknowledged to be late even by a conservative scholar like S. R. Driver. His treatment of the sources for Ezra (pp. 462-464) and other personalities likewise errs on the side of too great caution. But conservatism with regard to the biblical text is perhaps a good fault.

Each chapter is prefaced by a section which indicates the sources for the life of the individual or writer who is to be discussed. An excellent and detailed bibliography is included in the book, together with four maps and a note on the conquest of Canaan in which the author summarizes the chief theories of its manner and date propounded by recent scholars. A full index is also included.

Professor Fleming James is an authority on Biblical Criticism, yet he never loses sight of the spiritual message of each personality for the men of his own generation. This is a book which should be read by parish priests. It can be commended also, without hesitation, to the student and the educated layman.

CLIFFORD W. DUGMORE.

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THE BOOK OF REVELATION. By E. F. Scott. Student Christian Movement. 6s.

As readers of his many books on the New Testament will know, Dr E. F. Scott has great power of lucid description and critical analysis. For this reason one can think of no one more suited to write a short descriptive book upon the Revelation of John, a work which has been for too long the happy hunting ground of cranks and fanatics and far too much neglected by modern scholars and preachers. Dr Scott's book cannot fail to be interesting and intelligible to the ordinary reader, while it gives the student and teacher just the right amount of introductory knowledge, and could well be used by preachers as the basis for courses of sermons. I know of no other short book on the subject which can be safely recommended to all such readers.

In the first fifty pages Dr Scott discusses the origin and purpose of " the Revelation," showing the very important difference between apocalypse and prophecy, and exposing the errors of older methods of interpretation. He rejects the view that the work of John is little more than a revision of Jewish Apocalypses; and rightly regards the question of possible pagan sources as secondary, for all has been coloured by the Christian outlook of the author. " It is the work of a single mind, but does not aim at regularity. A logical apocalypse would be a contradiction in terms." The search for literary sources in this, as in other books of the New Testament, does not take us very far, for " the real question always is the significance which the writer himself imposes on the borrowed symbols."

In the second part of the book the writer gives a description of the drama unfolded in " the Revelation," discussing the main points where exegesis is difficult. Of particular interest is his treatment of the closing chapters, which he sees no reason to suppose to have suffered disarrangement. The peculiar feature of John's treatment of the idea of a millennium, taken over from Judaism, is that in his view at the close of the period Satan is released and resumes his activities. The reason suggested by Dr Scott is that the author " realizes, as ordinary Christian thinking had failed to do, that evil can never be fully overcome while the earthly conditions endure." There will be a city of God on earth, the hope of which prompts all social effort, but it is only partially the Kingdom of God which is not fully realized on earth at all. Of this final kingdom John gives only glimpses as he foretells the final consummation.

" We dream of a time when all the miseries of the present will be removed, when all knowledge will be in our grasp, when men will everywhere be just and happy; and we make it our endeavour to bring about that time. Yet it can never in any real sense arrive. Passions which seem to have been eradicated are always liable to break out again. . . . So in man's life on earth there are limitations which can never be overcome, and for any true fulfilment we must look beyond."

The New Jerusalem is not the final home of the blessed, and all conceptions of heaven based on it are quite erroneous. It is at best " the vestibule of eternal life, which takes the place of the proud city which has oppressed the saints."

In the last part of the book Dr Scott analyses the doctrine of " the Revelation " and points out the special relevancy of its message to the situation in which we find ourselves to-day, for " by one of those strange reversions which sometimes come about in history, the situation for which the book was written has repeated itself almost to the letter." The emphasis on the transcendency and severity of God, the conviction that He will accomplish His purpose even in the things which seem to be defeating it, and the knowledge that He is the ultimate judge

of men—all this is indeed a much-needed message for our time. "Much of the weakness in our modern religion is due to its failure to acknowledge this fact of judgment."

It is much to be desired that Dr Scott's book should be widely read and that the Revelation of John should be re-read as a "tract for our time," which is so similar to that in which it was first written.

R. V. G. Tasker.

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The Gospel and the Church: A Study of Distortion and its Remedy. By Charles E. Raven. Hodder and Stoughton. 8s. 6d.

This book opens propitiously; for in opposition to the Protestant doctrine of radical corruption of the natural order Professor Raven draws from Scripture the Catholic doctrine that creation has an inherent capacity for the grace which restores and perfects it. But then with incomprehensible perversity he tries to prove that ever since the second century the Church has taught otherwise. His thesis is that at an early stage theology suffered a threefold distortion. First, the Church became infected with a Gnostic dualism, of which the symptoms were asceticism, otherworldliness and preoccupation with the supernatural. Secondly, under the influence of Platonism she abandoned the scriptural estimate of history as the manifestation of divine activity. Thirdly, she substituted law and hierarchical organization for the freedom of the Spirit and the organic unity which she possessed in the apostolic age.

The first comment to be made is that Professor Raven, while rightly asserting one element in biblical doctrine, has suppressed other elements of equal importance. Denying total depravity, he overlooks the real effects of the Fall; condemning *metaphysical* dualism, he fails to recognize the *moral* dualism indicated by the words of St John: *We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one ;* stressing the essential goodness of nature, he ignores its limitations; while the fact that he uses the words *supernatural* and *otherworldly* with derogatory meaning shows how imperfectly he has grasped the implications of the new creation. His attitude to asceticism is significant; for he seems to assume that it is invariably prompted by a dualistic abhorrence of nature, forgetting that Christian renunciation itself attributes value to what is renounced, even while it testifies to the surpassing worth of the pearl of great price. He appears also to ignore the principle that, while the temporal things which are seen are to be *used*, only the eternal God, who is not seen, is to be *enjoyed*. It is not surprising that he makes these mistakes; for no one who speaks of Scripture as he does is in a position to interpret it. Besides making tiresome remarks about "legendary embellishments" and "heightening of the miraculous element" he has the presumption to say that the author of Revelation "has

grievously misunderstood the spirit of Christ and distorted the message of Christianity" (pp. 52 *f.*). It is high time it was realized that a Chair at the University does not entitle a man to judge the word of God.

It is clear that the distortion which Professor Raven discerns in the Church is largely a projection from his own defective theology. For the rest his argument fails because, though he makes great play with Gnosticism, Tertullian and various apocryphal writings, he for the most part avoids the main stream of tradition which alone can be said to represent orthodoxy. It is true that he mentions St Augustine and St Jerome, but, when he accuses the former (p. 76) of uttering "dirty gibes" and says of the latter (p. 124) that "the first impression of him is of one almost wholly devoid of religion," we may be excused from taking him very seriously. It is not suggested that there has never been any distortion in the Church, but its presence is not proved by reference to errors which the Church herself has condemned. Incidentally it is significant that Professor Raven does not extend his survey to include the medieval stabilization of theology. It would be hard to convict St Thomas of depreciating nature.

Professor Raven is more interesting when he calls for a theocentric interpretation of history to counter Marxism and the like, and his chapter on "The Necessity of History" is worth reading; but his very insistence on this point condemns his own attempt to expound Church history as affording little, if any, evidence of God's working. He should study the doctrine of the mystical body; for that body is the principal manifestation of the divine activity since the Ascension, the chief testimony to the reality of Christ's human nature, and the means whereby the natural unity of mankind is perfected; and its hierarchical organization, which through the apostolic succession ties Christianity to its foundation in history, so far from being the negation of organic community, provides that structure which every complex organism must have.

G. B. Bentley.

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Let Me Go Back. By Winifred Peck. Faber and Faber. 7s. 6d.

In this delightful novel Lady Peck has subjected the ultra-conservative and stay-at-home denizens of a typical cathedral town in the Midlands to the touchstone of an alleged miracle in their midst. A scientific phenomenon becomes a factor in the faith of each member of that very heterogeneous Chapter, and from twenty anxious minutes in the operating theatre of the local nursing-home derive violent changes in the lives and attitudes of nearly all the dependents of Mildrum Cathedral. Perhaps the most sympathetic character-sketch is that of the Dean's eldest son, who starts as a doctrinaire rationalist with all

the prepossessions of modernism, and ends in the humility of honest doubt. Lady Peck, who is the sister of Mgr Ronald Knox, has something of her brother's incisive satire and limpid style, with which the eccentricities and peccadilloes of the elderly Canons are amusingly but not uncharitably portrayed. A less expert writer might have " guyed " some of the rather unworthy clerics whom we meet in this fascinating story, but Lady Peck is too shrewd for this. Her treatment is throughout sincere and realistic, and I think that her characters emerge from the ordeal of having to face a possible miracle in real life more nobly and worthily than do Bernard Shaw's at the end of *St Joan*. To practically all of them the shock of coming face to face with the reality of things about which they have before talked a great deal in the abstract brings a salutary release from an impossible position.

To my mind the climax of the story is reached in the exceedingly well-written conversation between the revolutionary son of the Deanery and Canon Morden, the modernist scholar, on the site of Canon Busby's excavation. Was ecclesiastical modernism going to end in defenceless scepticism, or was political and æsthetic modernism going to find after all something worth while in the Christian faith ? The light and happy atmosphere of the book is due to the exceptionally skilful portraiture of the patient of the miracle, Fanny St Arthur, the Dean's wife, who rules and prays for each member of her rather difficult but very charming family with a sympathy and patience which it is inspiring to contemplate.

For brightness, interest and limpidity of style this was one of the best novels of the year.

R. G. Lunt.

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Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century. Edited by Carleton Brown. Clarendon Press. 10s. 6d.

An Anthology of Modern Verse. Chosen by Robert Lynd. Nelson. 7s. 6d.

These two anthologies bring out the profound difference in the outlook of the centuries they represent. It is the peculiar function of the art of any age to express the hidden, inarticulate desires and hopes of the illiterate masses; and poetry, albeit a restricted and somewhat precious mode of utterance beside the more popular modes of pictorial representation and song, brings out the characteristics of its environment like a small and delicately framed mirror reflecting a wide and varied landscape.

The distinction between the medieval and modern world is primarily a distinction in religious ideology. The Catholic medieval mind regarded God as personal, and separate from His creation: the pantheistic modern mind tends to regard Him through the medium of sensuous contact with nature. This depersonalization of God, which began with Spinoza, had taken

firm root in the eighteenth century, and has persisted side by side with a growing materialism until our day. But during the nineteenth century it played little part in the inspiration of the arts, which were concerned mainly with the romantic love of human beings; and it was not until the close of the century that the conscious, pantheistic note began to sound in the novels of Hardy, the poetry of Housman, and the work of the impressionist painters and composers.

The poetry of Gerald Manley Hopkins is a link between the medieval and the modern: he succeeded in that most happy and rare medium, the religious nature-poem. " The Windhover " and " Pied Beauty," both reproduced in Mr Lynd's anthology, are superb examples of the sensuous feeling for the beauty of the natural world subordinated to a greater metaphysical whole, in which what is *felt* is enshrined in what is *known*. Hopkins, like the religion he adopted, was able to fuse the sensuous and the rational in one experience—a gift that though inborn was fostered by his Catholicism. Housman—who, like Hopkins, was unique—also linked up two ages in his work, which contains elements of romantic love and impersonal naturalism. His " Bredon Hill " is as much a tale of true love as anything in Tennyson; but set against the background of the English countryside it assumes that indefinable atmosphere of " sweete sadnesse " and fatality that seems inseparable from our landscape. It is true that the English poets were the most vividly affected by the pantheistic spirit; but it was, and still is, a universal movement, though less obvious in the more humanistic Catholic countries.

The range of Mr Carleton Brown's anthology is bound to be very limited, first because his subject-matter is out of touch with a great deal of modern thought, and second because he reproduces the old spelling—a process akin to that of the musical purists who persist in playing Purcell and his contemporaries on viols, sackbut and harpsichord. The line " he cam also stylle per his moder was " loses nothing by being rendered " He came all so still, where his mother was." Furthermore, a poetic communication should be as direct and unhampered as possible; and to those unfamiliar with it the old spelling is a barrier (a small but irritating barrier) between the message of the poet and his reception of it. Leaving the statement of opinion for the field of evaluation, there can be nothing but praise for the beautifully arranged form and tasteful scholarship of this work. Nevertheless, it is a scholar's book: precious, limited, but exquisite in its own way.

Mr Lynd's anthology will have a much wider public. Its note is in harmony with the age—the pessimistic, pantheistic, bewildered age that is passing into a new age of facile Marxist optimism. It would require one far more widely acquainted

with modern poetry than the present reviewer to pass an adequate judgment on Mr Lynd's selection. But to an ordinary educated reader it is safe to say that it will be found wholly satisfying.

ROBERT HAMILTON.

## SHORTER NOTICES

THE CHRONICLE OF BROTHER WOLF. By "Tertius." Mowbray. 5s.

St Francis is one of those rare characters in history who become more luminous as we advance in knowledge—or, perhaps one should say, in a certain kind of knowledge—since that greatest of the medieval saints remained at best a shadowy enigma to the hard-bitten scientists of a generation ago. Now there is a danger of the opposite extremity; and our profounder psychological knowledge has put into our hands delicate instruments not always suited to the rough-hewn life of the Middle Ages. So we get pretty stories for children in which those luminous figures are translated into Noah's Ark pieces, and St Francis has had more than his share of such treatment. The present book does avoid the extreme edges of this approach; but the narrator of Brother Wolf is occasionally guilty of sentimentalizing his subject.

ASHLEY SAMPSON.

MY SISTERS PASS BY. By Marie Rene Bazin. Burns Oates. 5s.

In *My Sisters Pass By* the life and work of nuns in many countries is portrayed—although, as one would expect in a sequel to *Some Sisters of Mine*, the setting is a French one. Perhaps the most valuable contribution that this book makes to literature is the manner in which it gives quite different types of character free play in the atmosphere of the cloister. There is nothing wooden or stereotyped about them; but it should be read, if it is to be enjoyed to the full, as an act of devotion as well as an artistic creation. Particularly good in this respect is the war diary of 1914, which reflects the broil of a big world as it affected the heart and mind of "Mother St Frances of Paula" in herself.

ASHLEY SAMPSON.

### CORRESPONDENCE (*continued from p.* 134).

Mr Bethell writes as follows:—

From his chapter "Rumination on the Face of Nature," I certainly gathered that Professor Elliott felt the Christianization of Europe from America to be a future possibility. Such is surely implied in the following passages:

"Modern naturism, emanating from the studios, parlours, and parks of European or Europeanized society, is foreign to the native genius of America." (P. 219.)

" Pantheistic naturism is the product of the studio. Practical and vital contact with nature fosters the conception of God that characterizes catholic religion.

" To encourage that kind of contact with nature should surely be a main concern of the Church, of organized religion in all its branches, particularly in America." (P. 220.)

" What will America do to the Church and to the Cow, and what will they do to America ? Our fate hangs on the answer. The trend of modern society in all parts of the globe will be very largely determined by the extent to which we find the right inter-relation of those three institutions, America, Church, and Cow." (P. 224.)

I am grateful to Professor Elliott's letter for sending me back again to his thoughtful and thought-provoking book.

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*Note.*—Chancellor Mulliner writes to say that his claim to be the youngest residentiary canon in the Church of England (see the January THEOLOGY, p. 37) has been successfully contested by Canon Roger Lloyd of Winchester.

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# BOOKS RECEIVED

(*Mention here neither implies nor precludes subsequent comment.*)

ALLENSON: F. C. Spurr, *A Living Faith* (3s. 6d.).

T. AND T. CLARK: W. A. Wordsworth, *En-Roeh Isaiah* (14s.); W. M. Macgregor, *Persons and Ideals* (3s.).

JAMES CLARKE: O. E. Burton, *The Conflict of the Cross* (3s. 6d.).

DACRE PRESS: E. L. Mascall, *This War and the Christian* (6d.); Peter Winckworth, *Life Transfigured : A Mass-Book in Verse* (6d.).

J. M. DENT AND SONS: D. H. Lawrence, *Stories, Essays, and Poems* (Everyman, 2s.).

EPWORTH PRESS: F. Greeves, *Jesus the Son of God* (3s. 6d.); A. McCrea, *The Work of Jesus in Christian Thought* (6s.).

GOLLANCZ: Hewlett Johnson, *The Socialist Sixth of the World* (Left Book Club, 2s. 6d.).

INTER-VARSITY FELLOWSHIP: *Christ Our Freedom* (2s.).

LONGMANS: R. H. J. Steuart, *The Four First Things* (3s. 6d.); Dom Aelred Graham, *The Love of God* (7s. 6d.).

MACMILLAN: E. H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis* (10s. 6d.).

MARSHALL, MORGAN AND SCOTT: W. W. Lucas, *How Christ Bore the Sin of the World* (5s.).

M.R.A.: *One Hundred Million Listening* (2d.).

MOREHOUSE-GORHAM CO.: E. R. Hardy and W. N. Pittenger [Edd.], *This Holy Fellowship* ($2.50).

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS: *Proceedings of the British Academy* (30s.); W. D. Maxwell: *An Outline of Christian Worship* (New edition, 5s.); Charles Williams, *Judgment at Chelmsford* (1s.).

SHELDON PRESS: W. O. E. Oesterley, *Readings from the Apocrypha* (3s. 6d.); *The Old Testament Shortened* (5s.).

SKEFFINGTON: P. R. Smythe, *The Ordination of Women* (5s.).

S.P.C.K.: F. C. Macnutt, *A War Primer* (2s. 6d.); S. Papakosta, *Eusebius Matthopoulos* (2s. 6d.).

*Printed in Great Britain by*
*Billing and Sons Ltd., Guildford and Esher*